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ALIUNDE;

OR,

LOVE VENTURES.

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"Whither wilt thou lead me? speak!
I'll go no further."

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PERSONAL.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, }
WASHINGTON COUNTY, } *ss.*

On this first day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven, before me, the subscriber, a Justice of the Peace in and for the said County and District, personally appeared HARRY JULIAN, and made oath, in due form of law, to the hereinafter-mentioned statement, viz.: That he is the writer of the said statement, and that all the incidents therein related are true, and worthy of the belief of all persons to whom this may come, greeting.

HARRY JULIAN.

Sworn to and subscribed before me,
JOSEPH PLANTER, J. P. [Seal.]

ALIUNDE;

OR,

Love Ventures of Tom, Dick and Harry.

I.

It was as dark as pitch when the boat capsized and we were swimming desperately for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, as that fine old dry doc., the Declaration of Independence, has it. The water felt cold, too, and I shivered as I shook it out of my mouth and eyes and panted for dear life. Just then, as I came to the surface, I heard some one call me. My name is Harry—Harry Julian. I gasped till I could get my mouth well up, so as not to let the water into it again, and cried "Here!" in as loud a tone as I could; for, to confess the

plain truth, I was very much frightened and excited. A figure then came swimming toward me on the long swell of the ocean, and I recognized the voice as I was called again. It was my dearest friend and companion, Tom Huntly.

"Oh, I'm so glad you can swim, Tom; but where is Dick?"

As I spoke we heard a half-smothered "Hello!" to the right of us, at the distance of perhaps ten yards. This was certainly Dick, as there were but three of us in the boat at the time of the accident. Tom let me rest my hand for a minute on his shoulder, to recover from my nervous flurry, and—cautioning me to keep cool and not lose my head, that we could all swim, and that there was really no danger so long as we retained our presence of mind—called to our friend to come over to us. At this moment of extreme peril to be told to keep cool, when I was shivering with fear and the cold of the water, struck me in a somewhat comical light, and I began laughing rather hysterically, so as to make my friend believe that I was one of the boldest youths in existence and made a sport of danger. The trick was not very successful, however, for Tom told me I'd better keep my mouth shut and save my breath for business. The other one of our party by this time had approached us, throwing his arms out

vigorously, and seeming to be as much at home as if he'd been born and brought up on salt water, and had it at his three meals a day.

After expressing to each other our joy at finding ourselves still alive, and swimming slowly about, looking for the boat, so as just to keep our heads above water--for we did not know what else to do—we began to recover our dazed senses, and decided that we could hold out for two or three hours by swimming, floating, and treading water. Our boat had utterly disappeared, with all we had in it. As near as we could reckon by the looks and positions of the stars, it would be at least two hours yet before the faint dimness of approaching daylight. At first the darkness seemed horribly thick and dense, for I had been asleep in the bottom of our craft, and my friends said they also had been dozing, when we suddenly found ourselves upset in the water. But now the night appeared clear and the stars were visible as we floated up on the crests of the waves and stretched our necks out to look eagerly around us. Nothing but the black, hungry-looking waters, that seemed to stretch into an eternity of darkness, met the view.

There was no storm nor indication of a coming change in the weather, and only the usual long, undulating roll of the ocean which we had become accustomed to since leaving San Fran-

cisco. Probably twenty minutes or half an hour had passed, for common minutes seem fearfully long under such circumstances, when Dick, in attempting to rest himself by treading water, felt his foot strike something. He leaped bolt upright, like a sturgeon, fearing it was a shark or some huge unknown monster of the Pacific, and then, as we anxiously inquired the cause of alarm, he told us. Tom swam over to him. Was it hard and cold, or soft and slimy? Dick was n't sure—he was too much shocked and startled. I shuddered all over, and felt the cold chill extend up into my hair. Huntly, however, thought that there might be coral reefs or rocks about, and so he threw out his powerful arms and propelled himself to the place. Letting his legs down cautiously while we suspended our bodies and breath in a terrible suspense, Tom gave a sudden scream of joy, and then we knew it was all right. I never saw two handsome fellows in their teens—I mean Tom and Dick—more wild with delight in all my life. Of course I felt a good deal of interest in the subject, also, and with a whispered "Thank God!" plunged eagerly forward.

It was a large coral rock, and appeared to extend for some distance in what we judged to be a northern direction. Fortunately, we were all of good height—Dick and I just six

feet without our shoes, and Tom two inches taller. When we touched the rock, standing flat, the water just dashed up to our lips. It was a merciful relief. Perhaps by the early dawn we might discover some island near by, some land, even though a mere barren sandbank, for people are not particular about a rich agricultural region under such circumstances. Anything, so it is land, and good and dry, said Tom: "Here we 've been swimming about for the last half hour like a lot of stupid goslings, fancying the water was two or three miles deep, and solid stone within ten feet of us. Why did n't you tell us before, you preposterous Dick Noah?"

"I did tell you as soon as I found it, Tom; I was feeling around, you know, exploring the country."

We laughed with the happiness of youth, having a good solid base to rest it upon, at least for the present.

"I 've always heard that happiness lay all around us if we would only reach out and touch it."

"There he goes," said Tom; "we 'll hear Mr. Julian discourse now by the hour. He's been scared out of his usual allowance of talk since the boat upset, and so he's going to make up for lost time and other lost commodities."

"There 's nothing else to do," I replied, mildly, with a laugh.

"We 've lost the boat and everything in it," said Dick. "Nothing left but a blue flannel shirt and a pair of blue ditto trowsers apiece."

"You 've got your life about you yet, at all events," observed Tom; "and your appetite—did you bring that with you?"

"Yes, and nothing to eat but raw fish, and they 're to be caught first," rejoined Dick.

Then a sudden silence fell upon us all; for though we had been talking to screw up our courage, and the one terrible necessity of swimming, so as to keep from immediate death, had put away for the time all thoughts of everything else, yet now that we could rest our feet on a solid rock, the full nature and danger of the position recoiled upon us.

Anything but this awful silence in the midst of the darkness and desolation of the waters. It was appalling.

"I'm getting cold," said I; "so cold—so cold!"

"Press up against me, I'll warm you, Harry boy," replied Tom, clasping his strong arm around me, "and you, too, Dick; "let 's all stand close together till daylight. It won't be long, Harry. Don't give up so soon. Talk to us—talk—talk—talk! My God! let us do anything but think

of what may happen. The worst things we expect hardly ever do happen."

"And if there should be no land anywhere in sight, Tom, when the daylight comes! If this should be but a lone peak of some submerged mountain—some extinct volcano, in a desert of everlasting waters. There was no land visible in any direction last evening when it grew dark."

"Then we can quickly end our misery by drowning ourselves. There's plenty of water around here just ready for us."

"But we don't want to drown," said Dick, piteously.

"Don't want to go to heaven?" asked I, "where happiness is endless?"

"No," replied our companion, "I don't want to go to heaven—that is, just yet—nor to the other place, either, by the water route. I'd rather stay where I'm acquainted, and go by land."

"I wonder if there are sharks about here," said I, suddenly.

We hugged up close together at this fearful thought, and, chancing to remember that we had our knives in our pockets, I suggested that we should take them out and open them so as to be ready for a fight, if forced on us.

"It is the most sensible thing the young

rooster has said to-night," observed Tom, and we immediately proceeded to carry it into operation. We had removed our shoes and stockings, drawers and undershirts the day before, and made a sort of bed of them in the bottom of the boat, so that when we capsized each had but a blue flannel shirt and pair of trowsers on, as Dick had stated.

We opened our knives, the blades being five or six inches long, with springs on the backs, to keep them from shutting when used as daggers, and cuddled up closer to our big, strong friend, Tom, again. He was one of those easy, good-natured, lovable fellows, brave, handsome, and strong as a young athlete.

Tom, wherever you are to-night, I salute you! May the world be bright and good to you, and the stars light you. May the girls—but I forget —you may be ——

"I'm really afraid to move, for fear I'll slip off this piece of real estate. Tom, you are taller than Harry and I: look all around, please, and see if you see anybody coming, any daylight, any landed property, or outlines, or any ships sailing the summer seas over. The stars seem to be growing dim."

Huntly rose on tiptoe and looked in all directions.

"I see none of the articles named in the catalogue."

"Ah, if I had only kept my watch in my pocket, my pet, my beautiful gold watch, that my sister gave me, with my monogram on it."

"And mine is gone, too," said Dick.

"And mine," added Tom. "The whales will be going a-courting now, each one with a gold watch hanging on his flipper." And the trio of misery was complete.

But we finally came to the conclusion that there were worse losses than gold watches. A boat, for instance, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Yes. So we waited for daylight. And this is the way we happened to be in a small boat, with a bit of ragged sail, in these watery wastes, when capsized, as previously mentioned.

II.

Once upon a time, about a year before this night, three young men might have been seen living in Washington, which was the capital of the United States of America when I quitted it, and may be yet for aught I know. These youths were Tom, Dick and Harry—inseparable, loving each other devotedly; ambitious, with a bugle-clang of the romance of youth and adventure about them, and an eager desire to reach out into the unknown and cruise on voyages of discovery for the infinite, the true, the good and the beautiful, with a decided preference for the latter. At least that is the way they used to talk confidentially. And they believed it, and also each other.

They were members of the "best civil service in the world" (see Story on the Constitution, or stories of the constitution, and other high legal authorities), or, in plain common-folk's language, government clerks.

One of them received fourteen hundred dol-

lars a year, payable monthly, and the other two twelve hundred per annum each, disbursed to them in a precisely similar manner. And yet in spite of these beneficent financial arrangements of Providence and the Government of the greatest republic on earth, I have to lament and confess that they were not utterly happy.

The party in power—which is always the best party to be acquainted with—having been directed by the party out of power, (which, coming fresh from the people, controlled the House of Representatives) to curtail expenses, proceeded to obey orders.

So they turned out of office every one who had not a wife, or, what is called in the Washington vernacular, political backing—every one who had saved a little, economical traits being at a heavy discount—leaving all women in the perils of child-birth, all sick persons and poor children, and so forth, to look out for themselves. Also, all who were suspected of having even a two-cent sympathy for the party out of power hereinbefore mentioned, in which latter schedule were included the names of Thomas Huntly, Melchisedec Noah, alias Dick Noah, and Henry Julian, alias Harry. The three persons last named not having wives, having saved a little, and not running after the worldly vanities of

political backing, were thereupon, as hereinbefore indicated, "bounced."

Without making any effort to get back into the "best civil service on earth," they called a council of war, went into executive secret session, and, when the doors were opened, decided to go to California. People in extremities used to go to h— or Texas. Now they prefer San Francisco, as the climate is better, not so warm. They went to California, but, for some reason or other, did not take much interest in the State. Perhaps they were not properly appreciated. Probably they did not speak the language of the country with the charm of the vernacular. Maybe their talents had not cropped out to the surface. A young fellow may have talent or ability of a peculiar kind, and not take it to the right market; or, again, the market may be glutted with that kind of talent, hence these tears—this disappointment. Listen to this:

Once there lived a tanner in Galena (Galena is in Illinois) who was a very poor tanner, but certain high parties having advertised for a general to do general work, and also serve in the Presidency, the tanner aforesaid applied for the place, and they actually kept him employed for about a dozen years. Moral of the story—Young man, go and be a tanner, and they may use you for a president—of a savings bank.

Well, Tom, Dick and Harry did not like California. I am not able to say whether California had the same opinion of them, but I daresay it had. It is a free country, as I have often read in the New York *Herald*, and people who have money can go just where they please, in a measure, and do just as they like, that is within the pale of the law. Our young friends therefore embarked upon the *Sunlands*, a seemingly staunch vessel of 600 tons burden, commanded by Captain John Young, and bound for the port of Honolulu, Sandwich Islands. The crew numbered seventeen, including officers. Tom, Dick and the writer had some money in their pocketbooks, of course, though not what a millionaire would consider a sufficient competence for a man of business. The night before they sailed from San Francisco they had taken what mercantile people call an account of stock. Thomas was found to have nine hundred and ninety-nine dollars and forty cents. We'll call it an even thousand, said Tom. Very well; and charge the odd sixty cents to profit and loss. Dick had about eight hundred dollars, and I footed up seven hundred and ninety, being by a vote of two to one the convicted pauper of the party.

But I tell you we felt rich, for we had health, hope, and all the future there was on the Pacific coast before us. I don't remember exactly what

we intended to do in the Sandwich Islands. Something was said about sugar plantations, coffee estates for three, bananas, waving palm trees, oranges, cocoanuts on the half shell, and amiable natives, to be had for about ten cents a day, to do all the work and conscientiously hand over all the profits to Tom, Dick and Harry. Fresh, tropical and charming. And we liked it. We were to lie under the waving palms mentioned as above in the schedule, make love to the choicest of the Hawaiian Venuses, and give receipts for the money.

Well, it doesn't matter much now what we intended to do, for we never reached those islands of the blest on account of a storm. Heavens! such a storm! I'll tell you all about it.

We had heard it cautiously and mysteriously whispered about a few days after leaving port that the carpenter had reported a leak. Then about the same time the weather began to get rough, and the cargo had shifted with the ship's rolling, and still more seriously damaged her frame. As we had no particular sea-knowledge, though two of us had been in Europe, we did not feel much alarm, as the ship did not belong to us, and we concluded that the captain understood his business. If he did not it was his own lookout, not ours. We had paid our passage, and expected to be delivered, as per agreement. When you

pay your doctor in advance you shift all the responsibility to his shoulders. If you die on his hands, let him beware of the coroner, and the consequences. So we felt just about this way in relation to Captain Young. In spite of all the crew could do, however, the leak gained on us. The weather became rougher, too, and the big billows heaved and seethed with foam. News spread that the ship was settling slowly but surely lower in the sea. We began to carry our valuables about our persons.

How the waves did drench us, and how furiously they beat upon the helpless craft, as we rose on their long green slopes, and sank into the hollows of living, tumbling foam. The winds were terrific, and one dreadful day as we were clinging about for our lives, the ship was struck by a monstrous mass of water, and fell over on her broadside with her spars in the sea. Ten of the crew were lost in this horror, and the captain seemed paralyzed.

We managed to climb over the bulwarks, and gained the side of the vessel, where we held to the rigging for one whole night, amid the thunder and lightning of the tempest, drenched with the waves. Then the storm began to abate, and the wind and waves calmed somewhat. The next day it seemed to have exhausted itself, and we lay helpless, longing for some passing ship to

save us. We had succeeded in getting at the provisions and water, and the captain served them out to us with exact care. As the laboring of the vessel in the heavy seas threw such a strain upon the masts, which were at one moment lifted away up and the next plunged into the seething mass, they soon broke off and she righted, in a measure. We found two boats that could be used before she would ultimately sink. The officers and crew determined, however, to cling to the wreck as long as she floated, and trust to the chance of some passing rescue. We had been driven by the furious winds far out of our course to Honolulu, and had found ourselves, when the gale spent its fury, hundreds of miles to the southward. No land anywhere to be seen, and the waterlogged wreck utterly unmanageable. No friendly sail in sight as the night again fell upon us. So, long, dreary days passed, and nights of wearisome, small miseries.

Finally Captain Young, fearing that the unwieldy mass might sink suddenly when we were unprepared for it, concluded to fit out the two boats with provisions and water, now that the high sea had gone down, and whatever else we could with safety to ourselves carry away with us, and abandon the wreck. This was done on a fine fresh morning, and, as one of the boats was much larger than the other, the seven survivors

of the crew and officers packed themselves into the big boat and made Tom, Dick and the writer get into the other. They divided the food and water and some brandy and other necessaries fairly enough, all things considered, and told us to keep near them. I did not like this arrangement; neither did my two friends, but although we expostulated, and urged at least one of the sailors to come into our boat, not a soul would agree to do so. We were to use the oars and a bit of sail they gave us, and by all means keep close to them, and they assured us there would be no danger, as the ocean was now comparatively calm—smooth as a mill-pond almost, they added. Then they said, also, that three would be safer in our craft than a larger number, and, as my friends and I would not agree to separate, no other arrangement could be made. We reluctantly agreed to it because we could not help ourselves. Those fellows intended to get rid of us, I believe now.

So we abandoned the *Sunlands*, and, lingering near by, but far enough off to escape being dragged and sucked down by the water when she at length sank, we saw her disappear about sunset of the day we took to the boats. There was a waning moon that night and we worked hard at the oars to keep up with the captain's party. About ten o'clock they told us it

would not be necessary to pull any more, but just float till the sun appeared. Overcome by weariness and exposure, we all fell asleep. In the morning the companion boat had either floated or been rowed away from us. At all events she was nowhere to be seen. Dick and Tom swore furiously (in Sanscrit) at the sailors who had abandoned us, and though they had told us the day before, while talking over the chances and hopes of rescue, that there must be some islands in this latitude not far away, and had pointed out the direction, yet we gave way to passionate indignation and despondency. And so we drifted aimlessly for several days and nights.

The change from day to night was very rapid in this latitude, for there was no twilight, and was a most welcome relief, for the sun was scorching. We managed to protect ourselves somewhat with the sail, and sank into a listless indifference. We never saw the captain's boat again and never heard what became of it. We did not pretend to care what befell the party.

On the third day after leaving the wreck, we started to our feet with flashing eyes and expanded nostrils. It was not a ship in the dim distance, as we had hoped. Nothing but the long, swelling billows with their white crests stretching boundlessly, and seeming to beat against the

blue edges of the tropical horizon. Nothing but sky and water.

About a week of this sort of life in death passed over us and we began to arouse ourselves to the necessity of husbanding our provisions and water. Sometimes for whole hours we did not speak a word, but, ah, what a whirl of thinking we kept up. Three sadder, if not wiser, young men never put to sea in a boat, I assure you. We had at length become so indifferent and careless, that I verily believe we were all three sound asleep when we found ourselves upset, as I have stated at the beginning. A sudden gust must have struck the dangling bit of sail, or we may have run against a sharp, sunken coral rock. Nobody knows how it happened. This is the true statement of how we chanced to be standing up to our lips in water, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, patiently awaiting the rising of the sun, and praying to be safely delivered from sharks and cannibals, if anywhere nigh the lands of the aforesaid.

Though we did not usually agree about things in general, yet all voted in the affirmative on the question that this was, of all nights, the longest we had ever spent on land or water—not having been spent on water, but in it.

III.

As we stood watching and waiting, not daring even at first to wade about on the rock to see how far it extended, we thought we saw some irregular outlines of land to the westward. Faint and far to our eager-eyed glances they seemed, but then, as the night faded and the light came, we could indeed distinguish something that looked like long, low-stretching hills, half hidden in the clouds. It proved to be so, and we broke forth in restless talk, fidgeting about and stepping curiously around, till suddenly Dick seemed to topple over the edge of the rock which had sheltered us on its summit and disappeared for a moment. He soon came up, swimming, as we moved hurriedly to extend him our hands. The water was deep over in that direction, undoubtedly. As the light became clearer and brighter we easily made out the shores of an island, and after swimming and wading, sometimes up to our necks, sometimes up to our waists, on the coral reefs, finally, as the long-ex-

pected dawn fairly opened, dashed through the breakers and fell wild with delight upon the firm, white sand. And how we did kiss that sand and look around and thank God for the sight of land once more! In all the world there's nothing so good as land, even though you don't own a foot of it. We thought so.

Then we arose from the beach, and as the water streamed out of our clothes we stripped them off, and wringing them as dry as we could, spread them out on the firm, clean sand, and lay down upon it ourselves, naked. It was so pleasant to feel the touch of this portion of the solid earth that we dug it up with our knives and wallowed in it like a lot of young pigs. It was as white as snow, and warm, too. After rolling about and half covering our persons in this way, we began to look about us as the sun rose. We did not recognize the country as any we had ever seen before. Unfortunately, we had no letters of introduction to any of the inhabitants. The white, sandy beach extended back for some distance to gently-sloping hills, tufted with waving, graceful palm trees. At two or three different points these hills were seemingly cut by valleys of dense greenery, full of strange tropical foliage. We saw no inhabitants, and thought at first that we were like the great Christopher, and had discovered a new world—a

nice little world of our own—bounded on all sides by the blue ocean and full of unknown tropic splendors.

Having become comfortably dry and warm by contact with the clean beach, we crawled out of these beds of nature, shook ourselves, rubbed the sand off each other, and went to examine our select wardrobe, the before-mentioned blue flannel shirts and blue trowsers. While we were shaking the sand from these garments and trying to smooth the wrinkles out of them, Tom suddenly looked up and uttered a cry of astonishment. Dick and I glanced along the beach, as this exclamation startled us.

"See! see! why, we have n't any clothes on! Let's get into our trowsers, post haste. Quick, quick!"

We had just succeeded in shoving our legs into the half-dry badges of civilization and getting them buttoned, when three young natives of the island, as we presumed them to be, came slowly and cautiously along the shore toward us. They seemed to be of a light yellow color, almost white, about the tint of Japanese, with fine, regular features, rosy cheeks, and long, waving, black hair. They stopped several times, and appeared once inclined to turn and run away; but then, after a hurried conference, approached again till they came within about ten yards of

us. How they did stare at us! It was utterly impossible for us to get our shirts on, as they were not dry; and then, while we were pulling and tugging to get them over our heads, the natives might discharge a flight of arrows at us. It was no time, you see, for standing on ceremony. Besides all this, we were as well, or, rather, much better, dressed than they were, for they seemed to have nothing at all on but brilliant scarlet sashes drawn about the waist, tied in a bow, and hanging down perhaps two feet in front, with dangling, fringed ends.

"Good heavens, boys!" cried Dick, in astonishment, as they halted a short distance from us, "they are girls!"

They beckoned us to approach, staring at us with their large, dark eyes, and smiling as if they supposed us some strange marine animals that had been thrown landward by the sea. How beautifully formed they were, and what fine teeth they had! We did not like to present ourselves with nothing on but blue flannel trowsers, not having been used to call on ladies in such costume, and I modestly insisted upon the indelicacy of it; but Tom, who was the oldest of the three, being within a month of twenty, said "it was perfectly absurd," that we were as well dressed as they were, and that it would be exceedingly indelicate, not to say indecent, to put

our shirts on before girls. Moreover, it would be an impertinence of the basest sort to them, he added, and as much as to say by our actions why don't *you* put on an upper garment. Silenced, but not entirely convinced, we threw the blue shirts over our arms and moved toward them.

All three were remarkably pretty. Small feet and hands, as finely shaped as those of the Greek Slave, which we had seen at the art gallery in Washington; wonderfully beautiful dark eyes, too, large and velvety, with long, glittering, black lashes. They drew back as we came up to them, and looked sheepishly and submissively into their eyes. Then they pointed seaward over the blue billows, chasing each other and breaking on the sand in curling foam, and then at us. We supposed they wanted to know whence we came. They might even want references, as people do when you go to engage rooms. Or was it our luggage they were inquisitive about.

We presumed they were asking—for the tallest spoke something that sounded a little like Italian—if we had come up out of the sea, as they saw no boat. What a sweet voice. Tom acted as spokesman, Dick and I keeping a little in the background and feeling a wee bit odd in bare neck and shoulders and naked arms; though

as my friend reassuringly said to me, we were almost as well gotten up as the society ladies of Europe and America when in full dress. That may all be true, but if you are not accustomed, as a young fellow, to go to an evening party with both your arms bare up to the shoulders, and the shoulders naked, also, how uncomfortable and really awkward you would feel, and how indecent the young ladies would all think you. They do it, though. However, it is all owing to the customs of the country. If you don't wish to be odd and eccentric, it is always the best plan to dress or undress, just as the people do among whom you happen to live. Don't try to set up new fashions of your own. The minority in such cases always get laughed at for their trouble.

Our big, handsomely-formed Tom, not understanding a word of the language of these young ladies, then pointed afar over the sea, and in pantomime made the motions of rowing a boat. They nodded their heads eagerly and smiled. Yes, yes, they understood that. Very good.

Tom has splendid, white, regular teeth, wonderful, large, dark-blue eyes, and beautiful, scarlet lips. So, of course, he smiled, too, and turned to Dick and me. We smiled also. It was equal to a late Speaker, who made a very

good living at this business of smiling, till the people found him out.

"What charming young natives they are, Harry," observed Dick, smacking his lips.

I blushed faintly, being young and shy.

Then when Tom had made them understand the rowing movement, he extended his rounded, white arms so as to mark a great distance, and then, by a graceful, sudden motion, indicated that the boat we were in had been struck by the wind and upset. The natives each uttered a plaintive little scream at this, and looked intently at our actor as he waved his hand toward us and then bent forward, threw himself on the sand, and went through the pantomime of panting and swimming desperately to their shores, to which he pointed. They nodded rapidly and eagerly again, and chattered musically to each other. What a delicious language. Yes, yes; they understood it all now, undoubtedly.

"I think they do," said Tom, as he rose and shook himself.

I remember noticing at the time what shapely, handsome feet and straight toes he had, for they were bare—in fact, we were all barefooted. The young natives turned to each other and began an animated, excited conversation, full of liquid vowels and lingual music and laughter.

They did not seem to be at all afraid of us now.

"Let 's go up and kiss them and get acquainted," suggested Dick; "eh, Tom; introduce us; you know them, I see."

Mr. Huntly pretended not to hear, as he went up and shook hands with the girls.

"What impudence!" I exclaimed.

"They are deciding as to whether they 'll have us roasted or broiled, the young cannibals," muttered Dick.

Tom and I thought they would scarcely eat us, they looked too innocent and good natured for that. But Dick had grave suspicions and doubts. After a few moments of this talk, they turned to us again, and the tallest one of the three motioned to us to sit down, all in a row, on the sand. We laughingly obeyed her, as we had come to consider ourselves prisoners, or captives, of these fair islanders. They then went off to a large, brown bowlder, half buried in the shining sands of the beach, one end of which extended down into the tumbling surf, and which concealed all of their persons but their heads. We watched them curiously, not guessing what they intended to do. Beckoning us to stay where we were and not presume to advance a step, they suddenly plunged into the breakers. Nothing but their shoulders and curly, black

hair could be seen, as they swam and dived, like three tame mermaids. They were as innocent and gracefully unconscious as babies. The whole scene struck us as being so odd, so different from our customs and manners, that we burst out laughing. It was too funny for silence.

However, it did not make a particle of difference to them; for the waves, rolling in from the ocean, made such a noise, such a musical roar, that it looked just as Long Branch probably did before Columbus discovered New Jersey, when the Pocahontas girls went in for a salt sea dip.

"Let 's go into the surf," cried Tom, suddenly, after we had made our comments and criticised the scene and the actresses.

"No, no; it wouldn't be right. It would be a breach of confidence, and they would n't like it."

"Harry, boy, you are a young donkey," replied my big friend, to this last suggestion of mine; "I 've a notion to take you in and duck you."

"That language, Mr. Huntly, is not strictly parliamentary," I rejoined, with all the dignity of a new Congressman at his first session.

"Bosh! come, come; let 's go in, Harry, Dick!"

"No, I'm sick of the sea; I've kept my back

turned to it ever since I landed—since I scrambled ashore—and looked longingly up those alluring valleys of fresh greenery. No more water in mine, thank you."

"Bother your greenery," was the contemptuous reply; "you've got too dashed much greenery about you—that's what's the matter with you. Isn't it, Dick?"

"I'm afraid so," said Mr. Noah, with much dignity.

"I'd rather be right than be President," I rejoined.

They laughed, as Tom rose and tried to pull me up by the arms.

"No, no, Tom, don't; I'm too weak and hungry to go to sea again. Oh, if I only had a good, round San Francisco breakfast! Even the meal of a Washington boarding-house might be worried down without anguish or remorse."

"The pretty natives will doubtless invite us to breakfast with them when they finish bathing," suggested Dick Noah.

"They may be the daughters of chiefs, with lots of big brothers, too," I added. "Didn't you notice what an air of command they had about them? You can always tell a person who has been from early youth accustomed to giving orders and receiving obedience. It gives style and a royal manner."

"More donkey talk, Harry boy; more and worse than usual. I tell you two sheep-faced innocents that I'm going into the surf to flirt with the mermaids."

And the handsome youth started forward.

"Think of what your Washington friends would say of you, Tom, if they only knew it. Think of the good Sunday-school teachers, the gray-haired Young Men's Christian Association, and the holy missionary men," I urged.

"Think of your altars and your fires," interrupted Dick, laughing.

He was making fun, the rascally young Jew, but I was in dead earnest, I do assure you. I hope you believe me.

"Oh, get out!" cried Tom, breaking away from us as we attempted to hold him back, "I don't own any altars now, and it 's far too warm here for fires."

"We are lost if he goes," I exclaimed; "the chiefs beyond those hilltops will murder us; for these young natives cannot be very far from their homes, Dick!"

"There may be some danger," observed my Jewish friend, speaking more seriously than he had hitherto done, running forward and calling to our impetuous youth.

Seeing us get up and move toward the surf, the girls came ashore, and by the time we

reached the big bowlder they had sprung to the rock and resumed their dress—such as it was. We smiled, waved, and kissed our hands, and made gestures of congratulation and compliment on their aquatic skill. At least that was the idea intended to be conveyed, whether it reached them properly or not. Again they smiled, showing their perfect white teeth, and shook the beads of sea-water out of their clinging hair. But they motioned us to go back and take our former places on the sand. The sun was growing hot, however, and as we had lost our hats in the wreck of our boat, we laughingly shook our heads and pointed to one side of the rock which made a little shade. So we went and sat down in it, and regarded them curiously. The tall one picked up some bits of stick, or seaweed, from the shore, and as the other two went up to her she broke these straws into different lengths. One held them, covering with her pretty hand all but the ends.

"They are going to draw for us," said Dick.

"And eat us for breakfast with the morning bread fruit," replied Tom.

"I'm afraid Harry isn't plump enough to roast. They 'll cook us first, Tom!"

"What does it all mean, anyway?"

The tallest, who appeared to be about fifteen, drew first and laughed, and clapped her hands

in high glee. Evidently, she had won the first choice.

We lay upon the soft, white sand, resting upon our elbows, and watching them in amused surprise. As the drawing concluded, they approached us. We then rose politely and bowed as if we were just going to dance the Lancers.

"Take me first," said Tom, laughing till his dark-blue eyes sparkled with fun, and striking his chest comically; "I'll make a splendid roast, and then you can make hash—Washington boarding-house hash—of my arms."

As they did not of course understand a word of this, it was all lost on them. His arms were tough and muscular.

The tall damsel, who had the first choice, acted a good deal like a civilized young woman going to market. She came up and took hold of my arm first, pinched it slightly with the air of a connoisseur, made me open my mouth, examined my teeth, which were all good and sound, though two or three of the front ones had been filled on the sides with gold, and looked like gilt-edged ornaments. The other two, at an exclamation from the connoisseur, came close up to me, and I underwent a most curious and careful inspection. They evidently thought that these gold fillings had been put in for appearance' sake, as ladies bore their ears and wear

earrings, and some nations slit their noses and decorate them with rings. I could feel their warm breath on my cheeks, and the two other fellows just stood envying me and wishing they had had their teeth filled with gold, too. It pained me fearfully when that horrid dentist put it in, but now you see how Fortune sometimes compensates us for suffering.

Virtue is always its own reward—only wait.

"Upon my word, I believe they are going to take us up to the hills to their papas and big brothers for a cannibal stew," muttered Tom; "but why take poor, thin Harry first?"

"On account of his teeth—his gold-edged teeth," replied Dick. "You know in some of these Pacific islands they make necklaces of human teeth. I've seen them in the National Museum at Washington, and as Harry's are so ornamental, you can readily imagine what a fine string they would make. Ugh! *Diable!*"

This was consoling intelligence from Dick. I had seen those necklaces he mentioned, and had leaned over the glass case to examine them, little thinking then that I should ever come to such an end.

They finished their inspection of me, and then turned to Dick.

"I'm awfully tough," said he, meekly,

"you'd better not take me; and I'll be sure to sit heavily on your stomachs if you eat me."

They did not appear to regard our talk, and acted just as if we had been a lot of ponies or colts. Finally the tall one passed Dick with a toss of her head, and he breathed more freely, as he and I pressed around Tom. Here was a fine young fellow, with such a fresh, wholesome, pink-and-white complexion, that we felt, unless my gilt teeth won the prize, that Mr. Huntly would undoubtedly be selected. He stood bolt upright, like a soldier on parade, and looked straight out over their heads. The connoisseur felt his arms to see if they were soft and tender, or tough and muscular, as we supposed, and then backing, placed her arms akimbo, and with her pretty head tossed a little on one side, seemed to take in general effects, as I've seen young ladies do in examining shawls or mantillas on a dummy figure when shopping. She said something to her companions, speaking rapidly, and clapped her hands.

"Oo-lah! oo-lah!" they exclaimed, prolonging the last syllable into a liquid music, and then the tall one advanced gracefully, seized Tom by the hand, and led him aside.

"So, ho! Harry boy; she passes the gilt-edged teeth and takes me for breakfast! Just my luck, by Jove!"

"It looks that way to a man in the tropics," observed Dick.

The girl who had the second choice was of a more decided character. She appeared to be about the same age—in fact they were all between fourteen and fifteen—not quite so proud-looking as Tom's captor, but with a sweet smile and charming manner.

I thought she was going to take me, but she went immediately to Dick, took him by the hand, and marched off to one side. The shy little one, with the rosebud lips, and the dreamy, velvety, brown eyes, then had no choice but to put up with me. So she walked close to me, seeing I looked so crestfallen, took hold of my hand, and, as I bent slightly forward and smiled, as much as to say, "Thank you, my child," kissed me full in the mouth.

What a shout from Tom and Dick greeted this performance! The other girls clapped their hands and laughed in the wildest glee, as Number Three and I blushed to the tips of our ears. The other two fellows got kisses, also, and we shook hands all around.

"I don't believe they are going to eat us, after all," I said, hopefully, "though it may be a Judas-kiss."

IV.

It was decided that we would soon have this most important question as to our future existence solved, for they proceeded to lead us away toward the hills and valleys of flowers and verdure we had been longingly gazing at ever since our landing. We tightened our trowsers at the waist-buckle, threw our blue shirts over our shoulders, and went off very willingly with our pretty captors. It might have been much worse, observed my friends, philosophically. Better these than some scowling, savage chiefs with carved war clubs, looking like old-fashioned bedposts, who would perhaps have tied our hands behind our backs and knocked us all in the head, without taking the trouble to even ask our names and address, or the pleasure of an introduction. If you *are* to be captured, always prefer Pocahontas to Powhatan—that is, if you 're young and good-looking.

"I'm as hungry as a boiled owl or a government clerk," gasped Dick, "and I sincerely hope

they'll do the genteel thing, and set out a jolly good spread when they get home."

Talking and laughing all the time, they still held us by the hands, probably for fear that we might attempt to break away from them, and so we proceeded.

The blue ocean with its fringe of tumbling white surf, beating and retreating from the beach ceaselessly, soon vanished, as we began to climb the gentle slopes leading to the uplands. I was glad of it, for I was sick of the sea. How deliciously fresh the grass looked as the well-beaten path wound through it, and what strange forms of great-leaved plants, gorgeous flowers of all shades of scarlet, white, pink, crimson, yellow and royal purple burst around us.

Banana trees with their huge leaves we recognized at once, having seen them in the government conservatories at Washington, and ferns as large as trees, besides numbers of plants that we had never looked upon before. The flowers made me pant with delight.

"But we are so awfully hungry," we cried in chorus, "that it is not half so enjoyable as it would be on a full stomach. Ah, if we'd only been angels—I'm told they never get hungry. We made our captors understand by signs that the one thing, of all others, we would rather do just at this time was to eat, eat, eat."

They laughed and nodded their heads as if they thoroughly understood us.

"That's it," observed Tom; "man may have been made to mourn—though I don't believe in any such dismal doctrine; it's a reflection on the good Creator of us all—but man was undoubtedly made to eat—eh, Harry boy?"

I thought so. No dispute about that, Monsieur Huntly.

"You don't think he was made to be eaten, then?"

"It's the worst use you can possibly put him to, especially while there are so many wild hogs and goats—see! don't you notice them scampering through the thickets?"

The island appeared to be well supplied with these two kinds of animal food, and partridges and a sort of brilliant pheasant seemed to be astonishingly numerous; everything looked strange and rich.

Altogether we rather liked the turn affairs had taken. We had no precise notion as to where we were, but guessed or judged that it must be somewhere almost under the equator, and in the middle of that vast sea of mystery and countless islands we know as the Pacific Ocean. And that was enough for youths in their teens.

Brilliant birds flitted about through the dense

glossy foliage, as we wound among the trees, some with flaming yellow feathers and black-tipped wings, some with gorgeous crimson and blue wings, and green-breasted fellows with crests of the most dazzling vermillion. I saw one big old parrot of most aristocratic bearing loafing on a bough, and nodded to him. I think he must have had about all the colors of a first-class rainbow dashed about his breast, wings, tail-feathers and topknot. He looked down at us in a supercilious, contemptuous sort of a way, as though he pitied us, because we had no feathers at all, while he had such a coat of splendor. The female parrots don't dress half so gaudily as the males, having domestic duties to attend to at the home nests. But the young bucks are perfect dandies. I was beginning to wonder how much further we were going to walk, when suddenly through a charming vista in the forest seclusion we came to a tumbling brook with a rustic bridge of tree trunks across it, and scattered about under the trees saw groups of picturesque native houses. They seemed to be made of a sort of basket or wicker-work, square, round, oval and all shapes thatched with palm leaves, and running up into peaks like old-fashioned extinguishers for candlesticks. Altogether the general effect was decidedly cool and pretty, though they did not look very durable. What is the use of building solid

houses when Nature furnishes such a delicious, enchanting climate that you don't want to live in a house at all, but spend all your time out of doors, with a whole forest for a parlor.

V.

Our guides and captors had doubtless arrived at the end of their journey, for they set up a long musical cry, which sounded like the same exclamation they had used on the shore, "*oo-lah! oo-lah! oo-l-a-h!*"

The syllables were repeated in quick succession, and the last one prolonged until the beautiful valley resounded with echoes. We had seen no one as we approached, but as the shouts died away the spaces in front of the cottages swarmed with natives—men, women and children. A splendid race they were, too. Olive-tinted, with fine healthy complexions, rosy cheeks, most symmetrically developed forms; large, flashing dark eyes and glittering white teeth. The men had the air of princes, "born in the purple," and the women were also alluringly beautiful. All the emotions seemed to mirror themselves so vividly in their fine oval faces; and when they smiled it was really a most novel delight to look into their eyes, and watch the expression of their lips.

"I wonder what they think of us," we said to each other.

We found out afterward that they rather admired us. Their only dress seemed to consist of the same sort of loose gauzy sash the girls wore, and appeared to be made of a kind of thin crape or soft raw silk fringed at the ends. The elderly women wore in addition a style of loose apron or short petticoat, and the sashes were of all colors; bright blue, scarlet and rose color, seeming to be the favorite shades.

I shall speak of their ornaments and dresses of ceremony hereafter. At present we had found them in a negligent undress, not expecting foreign company. But what magnificently developed forms—especially the youth of both sexes—and how clean and fastidiously neat they seemed to be! We were evidently the first of our race they had ever seen.

As the young captors led us to an open space near the center of the straggling groups of houses and under the shade of large overhanging trees, all the natives gathered around us, laughing, chatting, and crowding each other good-naturedly to get a close view of the strange white humans with their legs covered up in blue wool. We afterwards heard that they at first thought our legs were deformed or diseased, and that in such a hot climate we covered them with blue flannel

trowsers, because we were ashamed of them. After the hubbub of talk and laughter had somewhat exhausted itself, and the three girls had explained to the assembly how they had first encountered us, there came into the public place a tall, fine-looking man of about fifty. He wore a head-dress of brilliant parrots' feathers and a scarf of pure white, barred with scarlet. The general deference with which he was received, that had nothing slavish in it, and the silence succeeding, indicated to us that he was the chief or cacique of the village or district. We were taken up to him by our captors, and when they said something we bowed, smiling, and extended our hands. As we had turned over our shirts to the girls to keep for us, we, of course, stood bare to the waist, bare-headed and bare-footed.

He smiled kindly, bowed in return, and extending both palms, instead of the right only, shook hands with Tom first, and then with Dick and me, and patted me softly on the cheek, I being the youngest looking. After this, which was very gracefully performed, he turned and addressed the men. Women and children at once fell back, and the male portion of the assemblage, pointing to us to proceed towards a larger building than we had yet seen, surrounded and shaded by trees, we all moved up to it and entered. This was the council-house or town-hall,

and about a hundred feet in length, by sixty or seventy in breadth. At least that was my judgment as I cast my eye around it, and I am not generally mistaken in such matters. It was quite lofty, and supported by dark wooden pillars, very tastefully carved, that looked to me like rosewood, oiled and polished. My friends and I had all this time kept up a running conversation, of course, wondering what would happen next, and what they were going to do with us. That was the question before the house.

"Settle the time and manner of our execution," Dick thought.

"Bah! no—nothing of the sort," said Tom.

"Well, we shall soon see. They are forming a circle around us, and have sent off the women."

There may have been about a hundred men of all ages around us, as I said this. They did not look fierce or angry. Their eyes were simply full of kindly curiosity and innocent surprise. When the circle was apparently complete, for they waited for two or three slow old fellows who brought up the rear, the chief placed us in a row on his right hand, and made a very neat little reception speech. As least we supposed that was the drift of it. It was a model effort, for it did not last more than five minutes (having lost our gold watches among the whales, we did

not time him), at least we guessed as much. Very gracefully done it was too, with a profusion of wavy gestures of the fine, rounded, naked arms, and in a deep, rich voice of mellow music.

"Bully for you, old boy! You are on the right track," muttered Tom and Dick; and I found it difficult to keep my face composed.

This speech was saluted at its close by the now quite familiar cries of "Oo-lah! oo-lah! oo-lah!" which seem to be equivalent to the English cry of hear! hear! and the American war-whoop, hurrah! hurrah!

Believing the sentiments just enunciated by the naked though distinguished speaker to be perfectly just, proper and constitutional, as well as popular, judging by the way in which they were received by the intelligent and respectable audience, Tom and I were about to cheer also in the usual "oo-lah! oo-lah!" manner of the handsome islanders, when, you may fancy our surprise and fright, as all the young fellows of the party suddenly gathered around us, seized our arms and legs, and proceeded—very politely, I must admit, in justice to them, but firmly—to reduce us to a state of Adam-and-Eve-like simplicity. How would you like to have your trowsers—but I forbear. If Doctor Mary Walker had only fallen into their hands—Consternation! As resistance was useless, and might have been

dangerous, and as we concluded it was best to conform to the customs of the country, we laughingly but modestly submitted to the inevitable. That's true as truth. Besides, the weather was so delightfully warm, that we decided to say nothing about it. If it had been intended as an insult, of course we should have resented it. You'd have done so yourself.

"I'm glad now that I did not 'oo-lah!' that speech."

Evidently we were to be adopted into the tribe, or naturalized, and so they took us *in puris naturalibus*. Or it might be that they were really going to cook us up for a mid-day lunch—undress us, and then dress us for dinner.

After relieving us of our clothes, they released us, and one of them produced a sort of long plaited string with black and yellow knots in it at intervals—a sort of tailor's tape measure.

"How do you like the country now, Tom?" we asked.

"I don't care a continental," was the swaggering reply.

"Are they going to measure us for a naked suit—a native costume in the fashion of the island?"

"Perhaps," I replied. "But no matter, *n' importe*, there's nobody here knows us; we are not in society yet."

Selecting one of the tallest, finest young men of the tribe, of beautiful physique and handsome face, they placed him by the side of Tom—our champion athlete.

The young man with the tape measure then began to measure Huntly's chest, arms, legs and so forth, comparing each measurement with their specimen youth. Our friend was about an inch the taller of the two, but in other respects they were wonderfully well matched—two splendid young Apollos—the native being just a wee bit tinted—a little off color as it were. Tom was very fair. While our youth was undergoing this ordeal, Dick and I stood lugubriously looking on. Then we felt tickled, and began laughing. Our quick glances had told us in an instant that the natives admired to excess, and excitement even, a fine human form, considering those so gifted with personal beauty as the especial favorites of the Creator. We knew this without understanding a word of their language, for their looks of admiration and their clapping of hands and other manifestations of approbation when Tom was measured around the chest proved it.

"Dick, *mon ami*, I don't think we'll stand that test."

"I don't expect to get as much applause as the champion, of course, but then we won't be ashamed of ourselves. Keep a tight upper lip,

Harry—don't sell out too cheap. If your legs, Monsieur Julian, were only a little plumper, and more roundly developed "——

"Oh, the dickens! I've tried my best to cultivate these legs, Dick, so as to compete with yours and Tom's, but it is a national failing of the young men of America to have thin legs. Young Englishmen beat us out of sight."

"Tom and I are Americans, Harry."

"Yes, exceptional, though."

"We have finer feet than the English," replied Dick, "but I admit that as a general thing they do excel us in legs."

While these things were going on, I was looking about me and the strange surroundings, and studying the faces of the natives. Probably about a third of them were quite young looking. One, a mere youth of about seventeen, tall and graceful, seemed to be flitting about in all directions, and from the sallies of laughter which greeted his remarks, I at once came to the conclusion that he must be the wit of the assemblage. As they were examining poor Tom, he sauntered up to him, and said something, which set the whole crowd in a roar of merriment. Even the dignified chief first smiled, and then as the laughter broke out afresh, gave way and joined in with the rest of them. Of course the joke must have been at our friend's expense, but he

appeared as indifferent as if they had been a troop of wild horses, frisking about him. I afterward felt quite curious to know what the remark was, and though, in the sweet music of the language of the island, it was very witty and pointed, yet I regret to say that, in the coarser forms of our English speech, it could not well be translated without seeming indelicate. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*

So when the youth came over in our direction, I took a good look at him. As he observed it, he approached me, without appearing to notice Dick—though he saw him well enough—and turning suddenly, we gazed full into each other's eyes. I decided or felt instantly, like a flash, that we should like each other, and smiled. He had a very striking and original face—something of the beauty of the Antinous type—and smiled in return, half comically, as he nodded his head. He looked so much like the girls whom we had met on the shore, that I inferred he must be a relative, and made a gesture expressive of extreme hunger.

I was getting tired of all these dilatory motions, as they say at Washington, and wanted something to eat. He came quite close up to me, offered both his hands with a half shy, charming, boyish frankness, and smiled again, parting his scarlet lips till he showed two rows of exquisite

white teeth, when I shook hands very cordially. We were just about the same height. Turning, he said a few words to one of the youths near by, who ran off and soon came back with a bunch of delicious bananas, which he offered me. I gave some of them to Dick, saved a few big ones for Tom, and devoured my own share eagerly. I had n't been so hard up for something to eat for months.

As we seemed to enjoy them so much, he sent the boy away for some more, and coming toward me again, took my hands in his, bent slightly forward, and touched first his right cheek to mine, then the left. This is their manner of pledging friendship, and is equivalent to saying, "I shall be most happy to become acquainted; to be your friend." His person was fastidiously clean and neat, feet and hands perfect, and his finger and toe-nails carefully trimmed and stained a brilliant ruby-red. He wore a small, round-topped cap of woven crimson and green parrots' feathers, with a floating plume, of a sort of swans-down. That, and the usual sash of bright rose color, was his costume. One of the most beautiful young scamps I ever set eyes on, and as restless and graceful as a leopard.

After we had eaten the bananas (I hoped they were going to give us something else more substantial for breakfast), he beckoned me to

look him in the eyes. I did so. With a rapid movement he touched his forehead with his finger, and repeated slowly, as if giving me a lesson in the language, "Too-too, Too-too."

So his name was Too-too. Then he made signs to me for my name. I told him, slowly, and he repeated it, "Har-ree, Har-ree."

And this was the beginning of a lasting friendship between me and young Too-too, who was the favorite son of the chief, as we learned afterward. It is their custom, when much attached to any one, to exchange names. So he gave me his, and called himself by mine, shortly after this first meeting. He stood and looked at me carefully for some time, and then at his own person, as if making comparisons.

Tom, having been elaborately measured and examined while this acquaintance with Too-too was going on, they brought a number of bright sashes of various colors for him to select one. They were about six inches in width, fringed and perhaps three yards long, made of a silky, glossy native flax, and not silk, as I at first supposed. Nor were they woven, but netted daintily and delicately. Thomas took a deep blue one, and then made signs for the remainder of his luggage; namely, the only pair of trowsers he had in the whole world. They laughed good-naturedly. No: he could not have those horrid things.

Having been formally adopted into the tribe by a *viva voce* vote, he was now naturalized, and, as a citizen of the country, must dress like respectable natives. Tom's astonishment and chagrin were ludicrous. I believe he actually swore (in French, mind you, which does n't sound so bad) as Dick and I laughed at his pretty blue sash tied into a bow and falling down in front. He was handsome enough to stand this costume, if it had to be done. But our triumph was of short duration, for the natives caught us laughingly, and we had to go through the same inspection and measurement as our friend had undergone.

When it was ended, I took a scarlet sash, and Dick a green one, and the obnoxious badges of an effete and far-off civilization—I refer to the blue flannel trowsers—were hung up in the council-house, like the silken banners of the knights in the royal chapel at Windsor Castle. (That's rather good).

Better for us as it was, for now we were in the fashion, and I make it a point when at Rome to do just as the respectable Romans do—don't you? Anything for a quiet life, as the horse said when they put the harness on him. At first we thought we should never get used to this island costume. It was so like living in all-out-of-doors, as Tom said, but when everyone else wore it, and the balmy, delicious climate—which

is just thoroughly perfect—made any extra clothing ridiculous, we had to grin and bear it. My friends made more objections than I did.

Messieurs Huntly and Noah were reminded of Demosthenes, Sophocles, and other noted and well-known gentlemen of distant ages, whose dress had exhibited their naked legs and arms as a matter of course, as their statues show to this day. Fancy the late Julius Cæsar, of Rome, with a pair of breeches on—bah! "Be assured, my friends, it is a mere prejudice on your part," I added, "perhaps an absurd prejudice. Men of the world, such as we are—ahem!—men who have travelled, should rise above such weakness."

"Punch his head, Dick," said Tom. "Pinch those prize legs."

Just as I had finished my oration on the costume of the ancients, men whose intellectual efforts we attempt in vain, gentlemen, to emulate, and so make it up by laughing at them because they did not wear pantaloons—just then, I repeat, breakfast was brought in to us.

"Let the ancients slide," cried Tom.

VI.

Ah, me! such a delicious feast! with the delightful, gay Too-too to superintend it. By no description could I make you understand our enjoyment, for we had been for so many weeks on the detested, treacherous sea, that such fare was to us equal to the very best quality of Olympian nectar. The nectar of the gods was, I think, by-the-by, very much overrated by the generality of people, from what I have heard from Olympus.

Our breakfast consisted of bread-fruit, sweet potatoes, fresh cocoanuts, bananas, oranges, grapes, roasted partridges and pheasants, cunning little fried fish, about the size of sardines, and chocolate, served in rosy-lipped sea shells, cut in two; and for spoons, for there were no knives and forks, we had polished pieces of tortoise shell, looking something like our spoons. Too-too taught us how to use them. Each of us had a little round tray of polished ebony, with legs about a foot long, which they placed upon

clean mats of woven yellow and black straw. Before beginning our repast, calabashes of water were brought us to wash our hands, Too-too showing us what to do in all cases of doubt; and then we sat down, cross-legged, like Turks or tailors, as the natives do, the trays being so low, and the men all stood around innocently enjoying it, and seeming perfectly delighted at our evident appreciation of the dainty cooking. The only thing we could not go was a shallow sort of dish of mother-of-pearl, filled with a species of small, raw fish, about as long as your small finger, clean, silvery white, with gold spots on their sides.

Too-too did not seem to like the way we passed these raw fish, and so he touched me on the elbow, and called the attention of Tom and Dick to what he was going to do. We were sitting on the cool pile of straw mats close together, and looked up at the handsome native, with his unusually large and slightly almond-shaped eyes, of lustrous, velvety brown. He took up one of the little fish by the tail with his tapering, dainty fingers, and throwing his head back, like an epicure when he eats a rarely large, luscious oyster, he bit off the head and removed it, and then began biting and eating, just as you eat sardines—bones, fins, and all. As he finished, he smacked his lips, chattered

his teeth, and went through a pantomime, indicating the most exquisite enjoyment.

We laughed and shook our heads, but he insisted. So he took my hand, moved it over to the dish, and I took up one of the little, nice-looking fish by the tail. Too-too clapped his hands with delight, and all the natives watched eagerly. Tom and Dick, upon being requested to join us on the same instrument, declined with expressions of extreme disgust.

Too-too helped himself to another fish (I had selected a very small one, about the size of a sardine), and we raised them to our lips, throwing our heads back as we smiled.

"Don't! don't!" cried my friends again, turning their heads as if ashamed of me and disgusted, but I took a bite, and, though I must confess I did not particularly like raw fish, I did manage to worry it down without showing any very decided qualms of the stomach. It was n't bad to take.

Rounds of applause from all the natives greeted the performance, and Too-too clapped me on the shoulders in delight. They had noticed, also, that I had not shown half as much dislike to the dress arrangements as my friends, and this disposition to accept things and try them without setting up the mere prejudices of the education of other civilizations against them, made

me at once decidedly popular. Tom, observing this, and afraid that he was losing position, as I tauntingly told him, for he had been the favorite at the start, by all odds, concluded to try a raw sardine, also, but he did not immediately regain favor, as the natives very shrewdly saw through the movement. He thought it was carrying politeness to extremes.

"Dick," said I, "as Tom has all the finest natural advantages, the only way we can keep even with him in the good favor of the natives is to try the diplomacy of manners."

"All right," replied our friend, good-naturedly; "go it strong on manners, and eat as many derned raw fish as you please, but don't expect me to nurse you, Harry boy, if you get sick."

"Oh, they no doubt have doctors here," observed I, with an assumption of swaggering independence which I did not really feel; "but we won't be rivals, Tom; only we 'll go to work to make our lives here as pleasant as possible so long as we stay. Meet kindness and courtesy with courtesy, and see the best in all things—eh, Dick?"

"Oo-lah! oo-lah!" murmured Dick, drinking the milk of a delicious cocoanut; "Mr. Too-too, I'm looking toward you. Your sentiments, Mr. Julian, are as fine as those of Mr. Joseph Surface, in the School for Scandal."

No matter what they said, I had resolved to treat the natives just as I have indicated. There was no bit of affectation about it on my part. I really liked them and the generous way they had received us, and I frankly showed it. If you don't like it you can leave the room—the front door is open.

My friends thought, however, that politeness and the complaisance of good breeding did not require a fellow to eat of every dish that his host might offer, such as raw fish, for instance. Certainly not. But if the host, as was the case with the hospitable, frank young Too-too, particularly recommended something, and urged its trial by eating it himself, so as to show us how nice it was—what then, gentlemen!

"Well, do as you please, Harry—you always do, I believe, anyway," laughed Tom, good-naturedly; and Dick said he did not want any raw fish in his unless he was starving and could not get near a respectable cook.

Finding that we could not eat anything else, the dishes and trays were taken away—those partridges were deliciously juicy, and the chocolate, though not made just as we make it, exquisite. The plant, or tree, from which it is procured grows on the island. Cigars, or, rather, little, odd-looking cigarettes, were brought by the tall, handsome fellow who had been set

forward as a specimen native and rival of Tom in fine physique. He was a brother of Too-too, but not so bright and clever, and very much under Too-too's influence, I discovered, though about twenty years of age.

"Brains always tell," said Dick; "even among a race of people who seem to have so high a reverence for the perfect and beautiful physical man, as these natives have."

"Jess so, Mr. Noah; jess so," I quoted, laughing; "you 'd better save that for your note-book, or lecture, when we get back to the States."

They brought us also little cups of pink and lilac sea-shell, mounted on carved rosewood stems, filled with a tart sort of native wine, which I liked exceedingly.

As I detest tobacco in all forms, having tackled it several times and always come off from the encounter sick and nauseated, I rose and declined the cigars. Much to my surprise, Too-too did the same thing, and made such a gesture expressive of intense disgust that it set us all to laughing. Zama, his brother, smoked even in his sleep, or at least we understood Too-too to mean as much by his pantomime.

As I was determined to learn their language as rapidly as possible, not knowing how long we might be detained on the island, I began point-

ing to different things, and making signs for the names, as the youthful native and I strolled off together, leaving Tom and Dick to smoke with Zama and some other young fellows who joined the group. In this way I learned a great deal before noon, as Too-too was eager to secure so willing a pupil, the novelty of whose strange appearance and sudden descent on their coast he evidently did not at all comprehend. He therefore appeared as eager to teach as I to learn, as this would enable him to explain the mystery of our origin and birthplace.

Crowds of natives of both sexes, and droves of pretty, black-eyed children, in a state of complete nudity, thronged around us wherever we went, and I was much amused at my new friend's attempts to drive them off. Having no hat or any sort of head-covering, we of course kept in the cool shade of the large trees. My hair, as well as that of my two companions, was cut close, as is the fashion still for young men of our country, which seemed to excite the extreme surprise of the natives, as they wear it rather long, believing that the thick hair protects the head from the effects of the sun. So they were always coming up when we halted anywhere, and passing their hands over my head to see if it was hair.

Children, too, in spite of all Too-too could

do, would insist upon feeling, and, sometimes, pinching my legs, to satisfy themselves, doubtless, that they were the same kind of flesh and blood as they had been accustomed to at home. However, I took it all good-naturedly, which raised me very much, I saw, in Too-too's estimation, as the natives regard any display of passion in trivial matters, or even petulance, as exceedingly ill-bred, and indicative of a small mind. Fortunately, I found this out in good time, because naturally I have not the most amiable disposition, and it cost me a good deal of trouble to soar up to the standard of high breeding, as recognized in the Aliunde Islands —this on which we had landed being but one of a group. By keeping constantly on my guard, however, I soon came to pass for a person of high rank.

About the hour of noon we had another repast, the natives eating three times a day; first just after sunrise, then at midday, and again at sunset. The middle of the day, when the heat is greatest, being about eighty degrees, Fahrenheit, as we guessed, they lounge about and sleep. Almost all their food they serve cold, which is one reason, perhaps, why they have such fine teeth. Bathing in the splendid surf of the coast where we were they practice twice a day, at dawn and dusk.

A person is considered scarcely respectable who does not bathe at least once a day the year round, and runs the risk of being cut by all his acquaintances, even among the lower laboring classes. No work is done in the hot portion of the day. In fact, the Aliunde Islanders do not seem to think that man was created for the express purpose of making work the end of his existence, and so they do just as little of it as possible. Nature, the all-good, the all-bountiful Mother, in this wondrous climate of perpetual summer, of balmy sea and land breezes, and of countless fruits, vegetables, and flowers, does so much for the handsome natives, that they probably think it might be considered an officious interference with the superior powers of earth and air, if they were to offer to assist them by work.

Hence, they good-naturedly abstain from the remotest approach to a seeming impertinence, for they are a very devout people—in their way. But of that hereafter. I assure you, if I were to tell of all the things I saw and heard in those lovely island homes, where the blue-floating mists of the vast, mysterious ocean conceal them from the roving merchantman and vulgar whaler, and the feathery tufts of green, graceful palm trees rise in ever-living verdure, you would want

to go there yourself, perhaps, and leave with as much sadness and regret as I did. But I anticipate. Things and events must be taken in order.

VII.

In the afternoon of our first day on the island, and immediately following the noon meal, we observed all around us evident preparations for some event of grand ceremony. Too-too was flying and flashing around like a humming-bird, and even the languid, handsome Zama appeared restless and excited. My friends and I lay on the cool, springy mats at one end of the council-house, and tried to sleep a little, but being naturally somewhat anxious as to the movements of the natives and our own ultimate destiny, we soon gave it up, and, reclining on our elbows, began to watch our new captors, and talk and speculate as to their designs on us.

Dick, who took a gloomy view of things generally, having, in spite of his good looks and talents, been disappointed in life so often, still held to his original opinion that they would devour us, believing them to be cannibals.

Tom and I insisted that it could not be. Even the savages who practice this horrible cus-

tom do it usually as a religious rite, or eat their victims taken in war. In regions where no animal food can be procured, it often leads to cannibalism. But here we saw that they had an abundance of all kinds of animal food, as well as the greatest variety of fish.

"What in the dickens would they want to eat us for, Dick!" exclaimed Tom, after listening for some time to the talk.

Well, Dick thought that in this part of the Pacific Ocean the islanders were pretty much all cannibals on the sly.

"But we don't know where we are," I answered. "Do you know what latitude or longitude we are in, or how far south or north of the equator?"

"No, not exactly; we can only conjecture. From the position of the sun, we must be almost under the equator."

"We don't even know what day of the week it is," continued Tom. "The infernal shipwreck and the loss of sleep and general upsetting and unsettling of things while we were clinging to the water-logged ship, and then afterward the long, hot days in the little boat, the weary nights and heavy hours—all these things have knocked me out of time completely, as they say in the prize ring."

Mr. Huntly had not made such a long speech since our arrival, and we began laughing.

"Very good, gentlemen, fellow-floaters, right worshipful wanderers, or whatever you may choose to call yourselves, do you, either of you, know what day of the week this is?"

"Damfino," observed Dick, speaking in pure Sanscrit, with which he was quite familiar—at least he said he was—and as Tom and I did not know the language, he may have imposed upon us, and then he smoked and was silent.

Upon the honor of the bald-headed eagle of America *I* did not know what day it was. I believed it was Wednesday, but would not have taken an oath on it.

"And yet you talk about being in the region of cannibal islands."

Rising to a point of order, I asked leave to correct my honorable friend on the opposite side of the chamber.

"The gentlemen will please state his point of order," was the reply.

"My honorable friend will do me the justice to admit, I am sure, when he skirmishes around his memory, and appoints a committee to investigate past conversations, that I have *never* put myself on the record as being of the opinion that we *were* on a cannibal island. I appeal

to my honorable friend from the tents of Israel if I have ever done so."

"Hear! hear! oo-lah! oo-lah!" was the response.

"Then I am a liar, am I?" cried Tom, comically. "Am I a peer of any lord in Scotland here, or am I a vassal—ha?"

"Here comes the gay young Too-too," I exclaimed, starting up. "Too-too is a good fellow, I love Too-too dearly, and I shall appeal to him by the memory of our sworn friendship to protect us."

The beautiful boy came dancing up to us, with flashing eyes and animated gestures. He took off his curiously-woven cap of gorgeous crimson and green parrots' feathers, turned it to show me that the inside was clean, nice, and new, and then, by signs, giving me to understand that this was the greatest mark of honor and confidence he could bestow, placed it on my head. These feather caps are worn rather as badges of distinction than as a protection to the head, a covering for that being rarely used by the islanders.

A profusion of thanks was his reward, expressed in as good pantomime as I could get up on such short notice.

Dick and Tom thought I was getting unusually popular, and as we had all three been

adopted and naturalized in the forenoon, that I would be going into politics next, and, before I could speak the Aliunde language perfectly, wanting an office, or asking to be sent to the Congress or Legislature of the Islands. He is going to play the game of the carpet-baggers, they said, who went South after the civil war—waiting till it was safely over.

Zama and a tall friend of his soon followed Too-too, and made Tom and Dick similar presents of these really beautiful caps of brilliant feathers, and this restored them to good humor. The only difference was that my friend Too-too had bestowed his gift with such a demonstrative grace and charm of manner that the value of the present seemed greatly enhanced by it. Zama had given his cap to Tom, and the other native his to Dick, as more a matter of duty, or as though they had been directed to do it.

Our three earliest friends of the surf and the sunrise all this time were not to be seen. Strange!

Had they dropped us and abandoned their captives to the young men and the chief, and should we never see their winning faces again? This conundrum we had to give up. While we were trying on the caps and admiring the fine skill of the work and delicate shading of the feathers, our blue shirts, which we had not seen

since our arrival in the council-house, were brought in and hung up with the tabooed trowsers.

We watched them with a curious interest, and after a little chat among ourselves, resolved to make no further effort to get them, but to let them remain in the custody of the chief until some ship from our own country or Europe should visit the island, and then, if we wished, we could demand them at our departure. As it was, it seemed better to have them saved carefully for us till we returned to the regions of our own civilization, when we could appear dressed, as would be expected.

A wonderfully wise decision, thought Tom, but I don't see what else we could do. Just so.

About the middle of the afternoon Too-too, his brother Zama, and their tall friend, Bu-lu-loo, as they called him, came back to us, and made us understand by signs that we were to go down to the surf to bathe with them. Proceeding by a different path through the rich, luxuriant tropical forest, we soon came to the bluff overlooking the long stretches of white, sandy beach. The views in all directions were beautiful and novel, full of strangeness and delight to us, who had never been in the tropics before, and only knew some of these wonderful plants and flowers from

having seen them carefully nursed and cooped up in the glass cages we call conservatories at home.

Birds were flitting over the seashore; white, large, and strange; birds were chattering in the cool, delicious woods we had passed through; birds of glittering crimson, and golden orange, and pea green, and others blue as sapphires and tinted as emeralds—birds, birds everywhere. It was a land of birds and butterflies, and flowers, fragrant and splendid.

"We will live here always," I cried, in the enthusiasm of youth. "Let the other world beyond the far, green seas work, and fret, and war, and pile up the products of its boasted civilization, and fill its jails and poorhouses. It is enough for us to enjoy and to be happy. Under these gracious blue skies, where snows and ice and the freezing winds of winter never come, we will walk forth as in Eden, shake hands with Love, and salute the joyous passions of unfettered youth. We are young—let us awake the gods of youth who have slept for centuries."

"Yes, Harry; very pretty sentiments," said Tom, "very pretty indeed," and edging up to me as we stood nude on the beach, he caught me in his strong arms, and, in spite of all my struggles to get away, carried me off toward a bouncing, huge wave. "I'm going to duck you now,

old fellow, for insulting the nineteenth century."

All efforts were unavailing, and though Too-too made believe to assist me, I reeled out from beneath a big roller with my eyes and mouth full of salt water, to meet with yells of laughter.

The great, bluish-green billows, with their crests of snowy foam, came swinging up the sands, burst before us, and those behind seemed chasing them in wild delight, as though they felt the joy of life within them.

It does not take long to undress in these summer lands, and we were soon revelling in the delights of the surf. The three young natives fairly astonished us by their feats of diving and swimming. We stood and clapped our hands. Then we dried ourselves by basking on the beach, and lounged back to the village. Sunset was coming.

We thought we heard the soft cooing sounds of the bamboo flutes the natives play upon, and turned to our friends. Yes, yes.

Occasionally the beat of a sort of tamborine and the musical clink of castanets also reached our ears.

Something was going on among the islanders. A surprise, perhaps, for the white-skinned strangers the sea had thrown up to them.

We were not kept long in suspense, for Too-too, his big brother, and his friend, after escort-

ing us to our mats in the council-house, went away immediately. Probably a quarter of an hour afterward—for we had to guess at time now—they returned in gala dress. Each of them wore a kind of crown, made of rare and beautiful natural flowers, which were extremely becoming and very fragrant; necklaces of mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell, finely polished, and bracelets and ankle ornaments of small, shining, rose-tinted sea-shells. Their sashes now were of snowy whiteness, and with long, fleecy fringes, tied and hanging down in front, and finger and toe nails stained scarlet.

This was the whole costume, but then when you recollect that their persons were as handsome as the young Antinous, as he stands in Rome to-day, looking with dreamy beauty down upon the Dying Gladiator of the Capitol, you may understand that Tom, Dick and I broke forth in enthusiastic admiration and clapping of hands when they presented themselves. Of course they liked it. As their eyes danced in delight at our surprise, they brought forth from a basket, carried by a boy who accompanied them, similar dresses for us. It may seem odd, to Americans and Europeans, to confess it, but we arrayed ourselves in these island decorations with as much youthful vanity as we ever felt in

our lives over the trying on of a becoming suit of clothes from a fashionable tailor.

As Dick has a dark complexion, of almost the shade of the islanders, and brown eyes, they gave him a crown or chaplet with a good deal of scarlet in it, and showed fine taste in dressing Tom, also, whose eyes are dark violet blue. When this was all done, we strutted about, admiring ourselves and pining for full length mirrors to reflect our festal costumes. That was the one pang of pain in our delight—no looking-glasses.

Too-too, as usual the master spirit, took his brother Zama by the naked shoulders, as he was fixing Tom's sash, and pushed him out. Then a whistle sounded, long and shrilly, from the flowery thickets of white azaleas, opposite the open sides of the council-house.

Dick thought they were going to sacrifice us to their gods, and that all this hospitable feasting, bathing, and gay dressing was but to render us more acceptable to the native deities. My crown of fragrant blossoms began to hurt me a little at this suggestion, but after a hopeful reaction, we warned the suspicious young Hebrew to at least allow us to enjoy life till the dreadful end actually came.

"Don't run out to meet your own funeral,"

says Tom; "it will come along soon enough."

"Yes, sir; jess so, sir; jess so."

As the sound of the whistle died away the melody of flutes and the beating of tamborines filled the air, and beautiful girls and boys, crowned with flowers, came bounding and dancing toward us. The chief and the elderly people also approached, and the building was soon filled with as large a crowd as had welcomed our arrival in the morning. Understanding but a few words of their soft, musical language, learned from Too-too that day, I could ask no questions—a great deprivation to me—and did not consequently know whether the exact and proper thing to do under the circumstances was to thrill with delight or to tremble with apprehension.

Dick thought we had better either say our prayers or take up a collection to send missionaries to these benighted sons of the ocean—get up a society for propagating young missionaries.

"It 's too late now; the Rubicon is quite near," said Tom.

"If we *are* to be snuffed out, let's die game," I suggested.

Resolutions to die game under the presence of pressure of this kind are always in order and always unanimously adopted.

A procession began to form. The three

mermaids who had met us on the beach and lured us into all this with their winning ways and loving glances we now saw at a little distance apart. Beautiful as dreams of heaven they looked now, in their crowns of flowers and snowy, fleecy sashes. They only lacked a gold harp apiece to look like sunburnt angels.

"Oh, you little treacherous wretches!" we muttered, as we set our teeth hard, and coughed and tried to get them to look at us. If we had been still standing up to our handsome chins in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, they could not have seemed more utterly oblivious of our presence.

"The whole female sex is but another name for perfidy. Yes, I repeat it, *perfidy!*" muttered Dick, and Tom agreed with him in the deepest article of indignation ever procured for love or money. To put it in the most charitable manner, to draw it mild, as they say in Hebrew, I frankly confess that I was bitterly disappointed in those girls. How different from the sirens of the seashore, all smiles and allurements, as they pressed up to me and examined the gilt edges of my best front teeth. *Diable!*

VIII.

Well, the procession was now ready. Too-too marched us to our places, and flew around like a twelve-hundred dollar department clerk, playing marshal at a President's inauguration.

"Ah, Too-too! Too-too! I would not have thought this of you," said I.

As the late and long lamented Mr. Cæsar of Rome cried, under somewhat similar circumstances, *Et tu Brute!*

The procession began to move. And I began to look about me for something that looked like the base of Pompey's statue. What is the use of dying in a heroic attitude, however, when there are no reporters from the New York papers around to interview you, and embalm you in history!

Winding through the tropical luxuriance of the woods went the long assemblage of natives in their gala dresses, to the sound of bamboo flutes and the beating of drums and tamborines. At the head of the line walked the chief or

cacique in his splendor of fluttering feathers, and his wives followed behind him. And then came the pretty girls and handsome boys, and clean, bright-eyed, happy children, fairly dancing with delight. We were, I presume, about in the middle of the column, and behind us walked the men of all ages, and the youths.

At the turning of a lofty hillside, the ocean flashed upon us again, rolling boundlessly away to the westward, as the sun in the blue vapors of approaching evening hung like a globe of dead gold over the restless waters. And to be sacrificed to the gods on such an evening!

So beautiful, so beautiful, the earth seemed, that to leave it now, while youth, and health, and love were all around us—even heaven had no attractions. There might, after all the books say, and the wise tell us, *be no other world beyond this—no heaven, and only the grave of annihilation.*

"Well, boys," exclaimed Dick Noah, "may the angels—if there are any—welcome you to whatever paradise may be found, or left after a thorough, scientific investigation."

"If it were anybody else's funeral, this might be allowed," said Tom, "but on the present occasion"——

"Well, Tom?"

"You'd better drop it. *How does* the Lord's Prayer begin, Harry?"

Down the sloping hill, past tree ferns fifteen or twenty feet in height, with their graceful, feathery leaves; past fan palms and huge century plants, striped with green and yellow, and we came upon the shining sands. Then skirting the shore for a few hundred yards, where great, hoary-headed rocks rose like palisades from the sea, we drew near the entrance of what seemed a cave. Grayish-white rocks, stained with many a storm, and irregularly disposed in pinnacles, and grotesque masses, appeared to be torn aside in the center, and a sort of rude arch, draped with long, pendant vines and masses of clinging greenery, dashed with white and scarlet blossoms, opened before us.

Beyond, the sea boomed and sounded ceaselessly. Occasionally spirts of white foam and water were forced through the fissures of the mossy stones and fell upon the clambering vines. From the landward side of the cave issued human voices, sweet and low, then loud and strong, singing a song of welcome.

At the entrance, stood youths in the grace of unstudied attitudes, with long rods of bamboo to hold aside the dense lush drapery of Nature, so that we might enter. Within, this cavern was floored with hard, fine coral sand, as white

and compact as drifted snow, and the roof, fifty feet upward, was full of domes and dangling stalactites of rosy white and dainty cream color. Immediately opposite the door—if I may so call it—was an opening looking seaward, with a full view of the ocean for a great distance away.

The place was about as long as the Capitol at Washington, some seven hundred and fifty or eight hundred feet, and about half as many in width. Inside, the temperature of the air was delicious, and where the floor sloped to the water there was a sort of terrace or flight of irregular natural steps of moss-covered stones, which the waves came up to at each flow, and dashed with coolness, then receded with a murmuring, dreamy splash.

Altogether a charming place for lovers on sultry summer afternoons. Fine, also, when the sea was silvery with moonlight. When the crowd of natives entered, escorting us, they filed to the right and left and formed a large circle around the encrusted irregular walls of what seemed marble or gypsum. The singing ceased, and as a perfect stillness reigned, we looked up. A figure in long, white, flowing garments, with the face concealed by a white mask, so as to leave only the large, luminous eyes visible, and with a golden sun embroidered in feathers on the breast, advanced from one of the side recesses of the

cavern, and stood still and alone in the center. Too-too walked toward him, and bowed low and reverently. It was the first time we had seen him since quitting the council-house of the village. The white form of the priest—as we presumed him to be—bowed in silence, and then Too-too stepped up to Tom with the agile, graceful tread of a young panther, took him by the hand, and led him over to the group of girls. Now we saw our sirens of the sunrise again, for Too-too conducted our friend to the tall girl we had first met, motioned to Huntly to take her by the hand, and then led them both up to the white mask. There they stopped, and the priest, beckoning to an attendant, a large yoke, such as we use for oxen, but made of light wood or cane, and entirely covered and wreathed with flowers and evergreens, was brought to him. He murmured something in their soft accents, and the girl kneeled and signed to Tom to do likewise, which he did not refuse to do.

Again the soft, liquid language, slow and measured, yet exquisitely delicious, and the priest put the yoke of flowers over the two heads bent before him, threw up his arms gracefully, and waved them toward the sunset, which we could see from the seaward side of the cave, and then a chorus of girls' voices, answered by a chorus of boys', filled the air, and everyone present, who

seemed to have a handful of flowers concealed, threw them upward toward the couple, and the air flashed with color, and became odorous with perfume.

Once more those sweet voices, and over all, rising like a lark, soared the most alluringly-delicious tenor I ever in all my life listened to. And this was Too-too.

Instead of being sacrificed to gods who delight in blood and the waste of life, and the agony of pinioned victims, our boy Tom was indisputably, unmistakably—married!

Consternation seized us. I mean Dick and the writer. But then it was not a very painful or even disagreeable sort of consternation, as we felt from experience, for the young rascal Too-too led us out to the priest of the sun, and Dick and I were yoked with the yoke of flowers, and held by the same hands that had drawn straws for us on the wet sands of the sea at sunrise. We forgave them, and took all back we had said. The same lingering music of alluring voices, the same throwing of showers of fragrant blossoms, and we were married in spite of ourselves. And that is the result of making love to strangers before you know but two words of the language. Let this be a warning to all young fellows in their teens, who get lost on tropic islands, and are not able to give references as to character

and other necessaries of a too advanced civilization.

After the ceremony of the flowery yoke, we had all kinds of refreshments, such as pineapples, cocoanuts, bananas, cold, roasted wild ducks, tart native wine, and a great many fruits I did not know the name of, besides baked plantains and bread fruit. The reaction from sacrifice to marriage was so great, that we came near getting tipsy on joy and wine, mixed. But, by heroic treatment, we spared ourselves this dishonor.

We wondered if they allowed divorces in case people grew dissatisfied, or if they had to remain firmly married forever and ever. They had no lawyers in these islands, and the people seemed happy.

"*Nous verrons*," observed Tom to the question, "*nous verrons*." What a delightful chattering there was on all sides, and what a confusion of male and female voices and gurgling laughter, as they gathered around the three brides and the three strangers! Then the priest cried out with a loud voice, "Allooah! Allooah!" and all present suddenly fell upon their knees, facing the mouth of the cave which looked toward the ocean. We kneeled with the rest of them; in fact, we did just as they told us by their graceful gestures. Opposition was, of course, useless. What difference did it make to us, so we were

happy, as we undoubtedly were. Just as the whole cave full of people sank to their knees, the lower rim of the sun, now of reddish gold, apparently touched the ocean and threw a long trail of shimmering splendor upon the pulsing waters, and every head was bowed till he seemed to sink, sink, sink into the midst of the restless, liquid, purple desert.

"Do you know that you've been worshiping the sun?" said Tom and Dick to me in whispers, as we all rose to our feet.

"A man may thank the great God of the universe when he kneels and watches the sunset—thank him for happiness."

"Yes—he may," was the reply, "but the natives were worshiping the sun. I saw all their lips moving as they bent their heads and closed their eyes till the golden rim disappeared."

Tom may have been right, but he was n't.

Darkness falls on the earth almost immediately after the sunset here. Already the cave was growing dim, as Too-too, with a flushed face and languid, lustrous eyes, came up to me, took me by both hands, and touched first one hot cheek to mine, and then changing rapidly, pressed the other side. He led me and Tom and Dick to a sort of dim, dry grotto or alcove, about thirty feet in diameter on one side of the main cave, pointed within to three beds of native matting

separated by platted straw screens of about four feet in height, and scattering handfuls of kisses in pantomime from his lips, and smacking his mouth, ran laughingly away.

People from the village were lighting their torches, as we met our brides at the foliage-covered entrance, and far up the hillside the songs of the natives rolled back to us, and we saw their lights dancing among the trees.

Three fellows not out of their teens yet, and all married! A wholesale business they do in Aliunde.

The fragrant darkness of the tropic night surrounded us, and the ever-lulling beat of the sounding sea came to us dreamily. Our first day in the islands, instead of ending in a sacrifice, as feared, shook hands with love, and glided away in the footsteps of the sunset.

So it happened that Tom wedded Monaa; Dick took Lonaa, and H. J. loved and was left to Coovaa. Net result of the international complications, six very young people made unspeakably happy. And why not!

Monaa means Dew-on-the-Grass.

Lonaa in the Aliunde language is Sleeping Moonlight, and Coovaa signifies The Breath-of-Roses.

IX.

We had arrived in this fair land in the midst of a high old gale of political excitement, as we discovered when the instructions of our girl-wives and young Too-too began to bear fruit, and we spoke the tongue of our charming friends with measured fluency. Kaowallo had just been celebrated, with much pomp and ceremony, in all the seven or eight islands. Kaowallo is what corresponds to our quadrennial elections of President. On that supreme occasion, people get fearfully worked up, and paid tongue-men, as I may translate their word, go about hither and thither from one fair island to a fairer, and strive to stir up strife for the benefit of a privileged class who lie basking in the sunlight, eating and drinking the best of everything, and calling themselves, with a most amusing affectation of humility, the servants of the people; when it is well known in their own sets that they are the masters. Too-too, though only about seventeen or eighteen, is a clever pupil in the arts of the tongue-men, and

when he cannot explain all these things to our satisfaction, he takes me up to the Mountain of the Sun, where the priests live, and we spread our springy mats under the dense foliage of the tamarind trees, and they tell us of the doings of these tongue-ticklers, as the priests call them, for I observed that there was much jealousy between the two professions.

They turn somersaults and stand on their heads and make faces at each other, says Too-too, with a boyish grimace, as he shrugs his plump, naked shoulders, and tells me: "I say, Harree, the tongue-ticklers once caused a great civil war, many moons ago; and just before you and the other two landed on our island, they came within a hair's-breadth of causing another, all for the sake of the privileged few."

"How many parties have you?"

"Two leading, prominent ones, and two others not of much strength."

"Tell me of them, please!"

"Suppose I get Mooza, the old priest, to tell us. He knows them all by heart. Until he comes (he's down at the surf, bathing, now), I'll give you their names. There 's the white bone party, and the black bones. They vote with little balls of white or black bones. These are the two leading parties that are always in a high old quarrel as to which shall be the servants of

the people—which shall be the best servants, you know, to gather the taxes of bread-fruit and cocoanuts."

I nodded and smiled as the youth laughed. It was a capital, good joke on the yoke-bearing, innocent people.

"And which side is your side, Too-too?"

"Friend of my forehead and brother of my heart," replied the young native, in the tropical, florid style of this fairest of lands, waving his hands, airily, "I am but a boy with downy lips; when I am as old as Toma, Zama, and Bu-lu-loo"—— He stopped, threw out his hands gracefully again, and waved kisses in the air.

"A boy is a humming-bird, and may sip the honey of life and love. And then, when older"——

"What then?"

"I will turn somersaults like the tongue-men. Tell the people how I love to see them all at work, and what a good thing it is to work, and how the lands would all go to the ever-rooting wild hogs if work was not kept up, and there would not be any taro plantations."

"Your tongue-men, I fancy, my dear Too-too, are something the same as what in my country we call professional or machine politicians."

"Perhaps," was the reply.

I explained myself with much care and

trouble, for many terms I found it difficult to translate; but the youth was quick-witted and full of interest in regard to our civilization, concerning which he was exceedingly curious and inquisitive, overpowering me sometimes with his questions, and startling me out of my propriety with his odd criticisms and comments. A fine young fellow, Too-too. The more I saw of him the more I liked him. We love some people for their heads, others for their hearts. Now Zama, his elder and only brother, always treated me and my friends well. But there was nothing demonstrative about him. His fine, dark eyes would light up sometimes as we found ourselves together, and I attempted to interest him in the adventures of my life, and to describe to him the people I was born and brought up among. It was, however, half the time a mere affectation of interest, for Zama, like all the islanders I had so far met, was kind-hearted, and, of course, for this reason, polite and courteous. He really at heart cared nothing about anything beyond his own blue-sea, island home.

To talk to Zama about America was like speaking to some people about Europe, the splendors of St. Peter's, the Milan cathedral, and so on. They care nothing about Rome or Milan, or any other part of Italy, because they know nothing about them.

Our girl-wives were, we discovered after the honeymoon, pretty much of the same style.

"Kiss me till my cheeks are rosy with joy. Say that you love me better than the pale girls of your own cold country. Press me to your bosom, till my love forces out of your heart all other love. Forget your far-off land beyond the measureless blue seas, and let me hold you to my bosom till it beats with the wild, passionate drum-beats of pleasure."

That is the way they talked to us. And so we obeyed them, and did not seek to worry them with stories of lands they cared nothing for. Wherefore?

Too-too and some of the priests we had met, the noble, stately, old Mooza, for instance, were the only natives that seemed to care much about our far-off country and its novel forms of civilization. Mooza was, I presume, at least eighty years of age, was a priest of the sun, and also, like all of his rank, a teacher of the upper classes of youth, for they combine these professions in the Aliunde Islands.

To be received by Mooza was superb; so simply grand were his manners that when he welcomed me and Too-too, the first time that beautiful youth took me to him, it was like an emperor, as with an imperial courtesy he swept the air with a wave of his arm, and gathered his

snowy drapery about him. It was all in the man, too, personal, for there were no sumptuous surroundings to impress one—nothing of the sort. More of that and the noble personage hereafter.

Too-too, in teaching me his language, had at the same time learned a great deal of mine. He used to astonish Tom and Dick often by his feats of skill in this line, and they were very cautious about expressing themselves too freely in criticisms of the customs of the country when Too-too was about.

"What the dickens did you teach that young scamp English for?"

"I didn't teach him English," I replied, hastily; "he picked it up himself, I suppose."

"Botheration, Harry! why do you talk such nonsense?" said Tom, with some sharpness.

"Sir!"

Coming up to me, he put his bare arms around my neck, and bringing his eyes of dark, dreamy blueness, with their long fringes of jet lashes, close to mine, we looked into each other—I somewhat angrily, Tom with a sort of melancholy surprise, like a young god offended. With his smooth, peachy cheeks, he then pressed mine on the right and again on the left, as the youths of the Aliunde Islands do when they make friends.

That was about as near as Tom and I ever came to quarrelling, and Dick, who was lying under the shade of a huge tamarind tree, pulling up tufts of the beautiful, fine grass—something like the famous blue grass of central Kentucky—threw a ball of it, which fell between our bare bosoms and tickled us, and we all began laughing.

"Why shouldn't I teach Too-too, if he wants to learn it, the very best English I can? Why shouldn't I attempt to make a Christian of him, also, if I be able to accomplish it?"

"Hurrah!" cried Dick, half-mockingly, but with good nature.

"You forget, my dear, pious Harry, that the natives of these islands don't worship the sun, as we at first supposed. They worship one only, living and true God, whose visible presence is the sun—the creator of earth and all that is in it—the sun, moon, and stars, and all that they contain, and all that is above, beneath and about them. A God who is a Spirit, inconceivable, inaccessible, indescribable to human eyes. No dead Jesus of Nazareth, the son of a peasant, and a man executed with criminals, for them. No three-headed God of the Christians, with a weak, human mother, who was at the same time the betrothed of Joseph, and about to become his wife, when she was discovered to be *enceinte*

by what you call the Holy Ghost. No wonder he wanted to put her away."

Dick had started up from the grass where he had been lying so lazily, admiring his handsome bare legs, and looked as grand as some superb Lucifer just fallen from the star of the morning. His dark eyes of the Orient flashed with enthusiasm, and he threw up his rounded, naked arms in an imperious, stately gesture. The lion of Judah had awakened.

"Thunder and lightning!" we exclaimed, staggering back in wide-eyed amazement. For as long as Tom and I had known Dick we had never before seen the oriental depths of his passion so roused and excited. Having always avoided any allusions in his presence to the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ, and, to be perfectly frank, never having paid as much attention to such things as we ought to have done, perhaps, the mine I had touched off by carelessly proposing to try and make a Christian of Too-too, astonished me beyond measure.

Huntly, who was of one of the old Catholic families of Maryland, and whose ancestors had been friends of Lord Baltimore, was, in form at least, a Roman Catholic of very liberal latitude. He said he did not believe in cooking people's bodies in order to save their souls. He thought the process killed rather more than it cured. I

don't believe Tom would have condemned any pretty Protestant girl to a hot stake. He would have told her, perhaps, with a paroxysmal, pious kiss, to go away and not sin any more in his presence.

A very charitable fellow, very charitable fellow, indeed. He always exonerated Mr. B——, of Brooklyn, because, he argued, that the lady was not young and handsome enough. Now, had Mr. B., of B., landed from a wreck as we had done, half-starved, and had he met the sylphs of the sunrise, as we had also done——

"Well, Tom?"

"Well, the famous scandals of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, United States of America, *E Pluribus Unum*, might never have occurred, for they, happily, have no daily papers in Aliunde."

But to return to the children of Israel, as Moses said. Dick paused for a moment, as Tom and I looked at him in half-admiring, though pained surprise, and then came up to us. We stood on a breezy hilltop as the sun sank to the distant Pacific, with the far blue mountains of the interior of the island back of us, and the balmy breezes of the tropics fluttered the beautiful foliage of the umbrageous tamarind trees, and even lifted the huge green leaves of the bananas behind us.

"Boys, American boys! in whose fair land there are no religious distinctions, but perfect liberty; no State churches, but where every man worships as his heart inclines him, I ask your pardon if I have hurt your feelings."

He held out his hands with an impulsive, boyish frankness, as his cheeks flushed with excitement.

We took them, pressed them, and said nothing more.

"As you Christians worship a Jew as the equal of God, you can be charitable enough to allow one of the same grand old race to express his opinions occasionally."

"Oh, never mind, Dick; let 's say no more about it. If I ever meet you in the sweet by-and-by, lounging along the avenues of Paradise, I shall be most happy, I assure you, to drop my golden harp for a moment, fold my swansdown pinions, edged with rose color, and renew our former worldly acquaintance. Won't you, Harry?"

"Undoubtedly."

We bowed, fluttering our fingers airily, and smiled.

"Thanks, gentlemen; references exchanged; no Jews need apply at the Grand U., Saratoga."

We threw the subject behind us then, as we throw our shadows when we face the sun, and

strolled down the winding path of the hillside toward the surf, where we heard laughter of girls and the shouts of happy boys.

But I must say that I thought of it for a long time afterward, and was not so much surprised at some of the actions of our friend of the lands of the Orient which followed it as I might have been, had the outbreak not occurred.

X.

We used to do a little work in our gardens (I mean our plantations) in Aliunde, in the cool of the morning, though you may not think so—a very little, just to keep our muscles in good trim, and hold our trained digestions in proper order. Zah-Zah, the chief, father of Zama and Too-too, and our own most noble uncle by marriage, had set us up in housekeeping, by assigning each of us a small tract of rich, black, loamy land. These tracts produced the chayote, bananas, sweet and bitter oranges, lemons, the mango, bread-fruit, yuca, from which they make cassava bread; the calabash, of which cups and bowls are manufactured; various species of the palm, including the cocoa and numerous other fruits and vegetables you have never heard of, and would not understand if I should attempt a description. The natives helped us to build, or, perhaps it would be more correct to say, built for us, a dainty, little, cool cottage apiece on these lands. (Fancy three ex-government clerks

from Washington building anything!) These palm-thatched houses were not far apart, we being, like the Aliundeans, a sociable party, and were also conveniently near for the important purposes of female gossip with the relatives of the chief, our uncle, and other noble families. It was fortunate for us, as I often said to my companions, that we had been married into the first families of the neighborhood at the outset, because it gave us the *entree* into the best society, without the necessity of having to push, as new comers and parvenues have to do in most places. You may smile, but *n' importe.* Every canine quadruped of average dimensions has his own proportion of diurnal felicity.

Jolly fun it was to see us working, as we dignified the occupation by calling it. Bending down the boughs of orange and banana trees, and plucking the golden fruitage glistening with dew-drops; brushing aside the huge blossoms of purple, white, pink, and blue morning-glories, twice as large as the sickly little things we had known by that name in the States, and laboriously carrying armfuls of cocoanuts to the laughing-eyed Monaa, Lonaa, and Coovaa. They vowed, with dainty hands and taper fingers spread over bare hearts, that they had never witnessed such indefatigable industry (*na-yaa-loo*, they called it,)

and feared we might make ourselves sick. We'd better take the bows and spear-headed arrows and go a-shooting for the golden pheasants of the woods, or bring home a string of dappled yellow fish from the cool creek tumbling down to the sea from the blue, misty mountains of the interior.

As for the chocolate tree (cacoa), it grows wild, and so the coffee-bush, though few of the natives use it, and almonds, figs, and pineapples —bah!—if you had made a morning call on us, we would have said, with a princely wave of the hand, "All that we have is yours—go help yourselves," for they did not belong to us, but grew wild everywhere. Yams and sweet potatoes, dry, yellow, and delicious (I am very fond of sweet potatoes), we raised just by telling a native boy, who was a sort of amateur servant and runner of errands, to scratch the earth and toss the roots on it. Watermelons, muskmelons and things of that sort are so common that we used to feed our pet pigs with them. Fact. Ask Tom or Dick.

And did we never sigh for our far-off homes and the cold, bracing winds, and storms, and snows of northern winters? The homes—well, yes, sometimes. The storms and snows—no, no, I thank you. I don't like snow, except in tropical lemonade.

And the daily papers—did not we miss them at home? No, indeed; our girl-wives told their boy-husbands all the news. Daily papers, unless we had hired a fellow to read them to us, would have bored us, I fear.

XI.

After we had acquired the language, we began to turn our thoughts to politics. As I have stated, the ceremony of *Kaowalla*, or the election of the Great Chief—the *Naalatoo*—of all the seven or eight inhabited islands, had occurred just before we landed. But as it is the custom for this high dignitary to take his seat four moons after the election, there seemed to be some mysterious muddle about the affair, which my friend Too-too could not explain.

Had the black bones or the white bones triumphed? Whom had the people elected? As they vote with little balls made of bone, black and white, the chief getting the most of these cast—they measure them usually in a sort of bushel or bucket—is declared to be the Supreme Chief, or Great Chief—in their language, the *Naalatoo*.

"Well, can't they count these balls, Too-too?" I asked.

"There seems to be a tie, and both sides

claim the victory; but, I say, Harree, if you will go with me to Mooza when the hot sun gets tangled in the tamarind trees back of us, he 'll tell us all about it. Swift runners are arriving and departing constantly from the place of Mooza to the capital on the island to the south of us. I am very curious myself to hear the news they bring from the central island of authority, for I have bet a cap of red and white feathers on the champion of our party, the white bones."

"So you are for the white bones, Too-too?"

"Yes, I'd rather be thrown to the sharks of Naboo or be torn by the wild boars of Tonta, than submit to the rascally, thieving, drunken vagabonds and cheats, who claim to have outnumbered us, and raised their chief leader to the throne of the great and good Ovanando, the father and founder of our race. May the suns of the immortals light him forever!"

"Bully for Too-too!" cried Dick, who was listening near by, "the young fellow is getting his crest-feathers up like an angry cockatoo."

We laughed, and I patted Too-too on the bare shoulders.

"Go on, *ma lalaaga* (my pet friend), sail in! I love enthusiasts. They are the only people who accomplish anything in this world," I said, encouragingly.

And then the young native, who appeared to

have heard some news from the capital, just before joining us, blazed out again in a splendid fluent fury of excitement.

His gestures of waving arms, rising and panting chest—he had nothing on but the usual scarlet sash, of course—stamping of beautiful feet, flashing of eyes, scorn of nostrils, curled lips, and superb disdain, beat anything I ever saw as a specimen of the expression of the passions of nature untamed and uncramped by the habits of long centuries. Too-too, besides being one of the sweetest singers on the island, seemed to us to be a natural-born orator. The sun of the morning had touched his tongue, or, as they say also of one especially gifted in any manner, he had his birth in the sunrise.

Too-too told us that their side had at first been admitted to be the victors, but the black bones being in power, and, of course, having the manipulation of the balls contained in boxes, had issued orders to their party all over the group of islands to pretend that the boxes had not all been sent in, and that though the white bones had, as they admitted, been supposed at the outset to be the more numerous, yet a careful counting in some remote regions might change the complexion of things. Nothing but what was perfectly fair, they said, did they desire, and with their hands on their hearts as the seats of honor

—Too-too thought they ought to have put them on their stomachs and sworn by them—nothing but what was fair for all sides did they want. Oh, no!

"They are always planning some trickery or treachery," said the youth, "when they talk that way. You will see. Wait and watch them. They have found out from their spies that we have outnumbered them. Hence, these orders to be so excessively honest in counting. If the race had not been so close, they would have made no contest. Do the chiefs who rule in your country, Harree, ever do such things?"

"Too-too, *ma lalaaga*," I replied, "in my far-away land of the snow-storms, and fierce, biting winter, the lives of our public men are as white as the coral you gather from the sea-depths of Kaltavela. So white-souled are they, O, bright-eyed devourer* of maidens, that we have to use smoked glass when we look at them. People travel for hundreds of miles to see a politician (we have them made by machines) who would cheat the opposite side, if he even had a good chance to do so. Often and often they come to their adversaries, and say to them, 'Here, tie my hands behind me, so I may not cheat you.

* The venerable Mooza informed me that the word *poo-loo-ga-ga* means literally the devourer. In the love-language of Aliunde, it is used, of course, figuratively.

Blindfold me, lest I see a temptation to wrong you, O, mine enemy.'"

"Harree, my other heart, you are as white as the swans of Guhlala, and your cheeks have the pink of sunrise, but you talk wind—talk air to me and throw dust from the shores of Ocoma in my eyes. You mock the tongue-men of the far lands of snow and wind-storms."

"Incredulous Too-too," I replied, laughing; "your ears, like the sea-shells in beauty, are stuffed with the wild, fleecy cotton that grows on the plains of Neybangoo, so that you hear not the truth of our tongue-men. Why, if I tell you that when one of them lies (and is found out) we hang him up in a cage for the bald eagle of public opinion to peck at, you would not believe it, O, son of the bright Maarahonas and honey-tongued charmer of maidens."

"Oo-lah! Oo-lah!" cried Too-too, laughing, "*ma lalaaga* is the blue mist of the mountain Val-da-vera, but I see through him."

XII.

After this conversation, Dick, Too-too and I went up to the mountain of the sun, two or three miles distant, where Mooza lived with a number of young pupils and priests. There we were not a little surprised to find Zama and Tom lolling under the bowery trees, and trying to play on the nose flutes of bamboo the trained natives blow with such skill. White-helmeted cockatoos, with crests of delicate sulphur-colored feathers, and parrots were perched about the cool, green foliage, with cords attached to their legs, the pets of the youths. Some of the young fellows were playing games with small pieces of tortoise-shell and mother-of-pearl about two inches square. They were carved and stained with spots and figures something like our cards, and the game is pretty much the same as whist. The priests do not allow them to put up anything for a stake, but I saw in a little out-of-the-way sort of arbor, a perfectly nude, handsome young fellow of nineteen, so delicately tinted as to be

almost white, with the usual wavy black hair, who was the subject of much laughter and jesting, for he had just gambled off a rare, long-fringed sash of crimson, and was removing it to pay up. As he would not dare to tell a lie about it to the good old Mooza, or, if he had dared, would have been cut by every fellow of his acquaintance, he appealed to Too-too, with a look of comical distress, for advice. Now, he also owned, perched near by, a most gorgeous parrot of moss-green and orange, with black tail-feathers, and Too-too persuaded the funny little fellow with a turned up nose who had won the sash, to take the parrot as a substitute. At first he refused, point-blank, on the ground that this parrot had such a bad character, having been taught by his former master, a dissolute boy of sixteen, to use such indecent language that he was utterly unfit for any young ladies' society, except that of the most reckless of their sex. The nude youth of nineteen admitted, with deep regret, that the parrot, when he came into his possession, did have a bad reputation; but, under the kind and considerate teaching of a certain person, he had entirely reformed, and now spoke the most refined language of the islands. Just as he was expatiating with florid warmth, tropical fluency and wavy gestures on the saintly character of the feathered scamp, and telling us that he had been solicited even to

train him up for the priestly service, the subject of all the talk burst out in such gross, abandoned language, that the whole crowd went into roars of inextinguishable laughter.

Finally, the sash was restored before Mooza appeared, under the promise that it should be paid for in native wine or shell ornaments.

Boys are pretty much the same everywhere, and do not usually give up something they have won for nothing.

The islanders have other games. One, like checkers, played on a board with colored squares, and one something like dominoes. More athletic sports, for the purpose of developing the muscles, and training them up to feats of skill, have been practiced since the remotest times.

Especially do they excel in wrestling and boxing; some of the women and girls being experts in the latter sport.

Their dances, also, are well calculated to develop the best muscles of the legs and arms, are very intricate in movement, and are performed with the most minute and graceful accuracy.

They write upon rolls of the paper mulberry cloth of the islands, which are usually about fifteen inches wide and of any length desired. Prolixity in their writers, however, is considered the unpardonable sin, and many executions have taken place, I was told, for this crime. Usually

they tie the poor author to a stake of ebony, or carved mahogany—common woods with them—pile all his works around him, and set them aflame. Death, under such circumstances, is said to be simply horrible. They were much astonished when informed that in our cold country we had no such law, and politely hinted that that might have been one reason, perhaps, for our departure from it.

When the grand old Mooza, with his kind, benignant eyes, and his long, white, flowing beard and hair, appeared, we went up to him—Too-too and I, as we seemed to be favorites—and saluted him with low bows. He patted us on the head patriarchally, and asked about our talks and studies, occupations and amusements, and then sat down, cross-legged, as all the Aliundeans do, on the piles of cool matting, and began to talk to us.

Tom, Dick, and I had adopted this style of sitting, as it would have appeared absurd to have had chairs made.

Though this place is called the Mountain of the Sun by the natives, it is, in reality, merely a high hill, or rather a sort of promontory, rising loftily, and extending out into the verdurous plain on the west of the island where we were cast. On the top of it is a magnificent old grove of majestic trees, the branches

trimmed up high, so as to form arches. The ground is perfectly level, and the fine thick grass always kept closely cut. There are four rows of trees, extending east and west, the space between the central row being about one hundred feet, and half as much between the rows on each side.

The foliage being very dense, and the trees tastefully trimmed, and meeting high up, they have thus three avenues of verdure, half a mile long, the sun completely hidden overhead, and only seen shining up the long lanes of greenery at sunrise, and filling the space with golden ar rows at sunset.

Having no particular seventh day for worship and rest, they worship each day at sunrise for a few moments, and also again at sunset, returning thanks. Their period of rest is in the middle of each day, when the heat in these latitudes is excessive.

This tree temple on the brow of the mountain was most wonderfully beautiful and imposing, and was full of gorgeous birds. The cottages of the priests and pupils were scattered about picturesquely in the woods, amongst clumps of palms and mahogany trees. Far off in the distance was a glimpse of the ocean and blue hills inland. They have peculiar views about building temples to God, saying that he

builds His own temples, and then they pointed to the grand old trees, with drooping moss swinging from the branches, and told us they were the growth of centuries.

I could well believe it. This temple, though much finer, reminded me somewhat of the long avenue of elms leading from the gates of Windsor Castle to the statue of King George, three miles away in the park, only at Windsor the trees do not meet overhead.

Mooza had talked to us some time, when I began to be curious to touch him on the subject of the political troubles. Pressing Too-too's elbow, I said something to show the object of our visit.

XIII.

The aged priest seemed very sad and averse to speak of political matters. He adroitly evaded it by questioning me and my American friends, who had come up to him, on the character and forms of our religion. Dick laughed, and told him that the young men in our country did not devote much time to that topic, unless they intended to make a business of it.

"What!" exclaimed Mooza, starting in astonishment and seeming shocked. "Do they go into it as a business to make a living out of it?"

In Aliunde the priests receive pay as teachers of youth, but would consider it degrading to the worship of God to be hired and paid for it.

"Here is a good chance for you, Harry," observed Dick, "with Tom to assist you, to make a few converts. I'll sit by and look on," he added, with a fine sneer on his handsome lips, "while you tell Mooza of your tri-form God,

whom none of you profess to understand, but all claim to believe in and worship."

At this I became silent, and Tom looked down and said nothing.

Quick in reading faces and studying manner, Mooza noticed the awkward pause and addressed me, Tom not being so well known to him, and not speaking the language so well as I did. So I had to explain things.

I was astonished at the surprise he expressed when told of the vast number of sects we had in America and Europe.

Mr. Noah sat laughing in his sleeve, or rather in his sash, as we did not trouble ourselves to wear the former.

"Tell him of your Jesus, the Jew carpenter," added Dick.

"Oh, let him alone, Dick. If you don't believe as Harry does, you need not take such a Mephistophelean spite in showing it."

"My dear Huntly, you misunderstand me," was the reply, and the handsome young Jew put his arm around Tom's neck, caressingly.

"Well, well; suppose we let the venerable Mooza do the talking."

The priest bowed gravely, and seemed puzzled. He had supposed we all had the same religion, and wished me to explain. I did so to the best of my ability in the foreign tongue, en-

deavoring to convince the natives of the error, as I regarded it, of their views. All gathered around me, even the wicked-eyed young scamp with the bad parrot, and I had, perhaps, including the noble old man, their teacher, fifty hearers.

When I concluded, hesitating and pausing often for the exact word in the Aliundean language, there was a perfect silence. The young men looked toward Mooza, who seemed lost in thought.

Then he began slowly:

"The religion of the pale races seems to make God, the holy, supreme Creator of the sun, earth, and all the worlds of starry nights, the God of boundless love and peace, also, the first Creator of sin or evil, or the personal devil, as you call it."

We started up from our cross-legged positions, but he calmly, but very kindly, waved us back to our places.

"We," said Mooza, "believe in one God, who is a spirit of perfect love. We reject all the old forms of religion, which represent him as delighting in bloody sacrifices and destruction of life; in wars waged in his name for the desolation of whole tribes and peoples, in order that one tribe or people, claiming to be his especial servants, after slaughtering thousands of

their fellow-men, might coolly take possession of the murdered men's lands, and give thanks, with the fresh human gore on their hands, for the countries they had stolen, kneeling over the mangled dead to offer prayers to a God of love and peace for stopping the sun in the heavens, as they claim, that they might finish the butchery by daylight, while the pale moon set in blood over the valley of Ajalon!"

His head fell upon his chest. His voice, sweet and soft as the dying tones of flutes at twilight, ceased, and we all involuntarily bowed our heads in silence.

"Jesus Christ was not a God of bloody sacrifices, and slaughtered peoples, and butchered victims," I said.

"No," replied Mooza; "from what you have told me, he was not. He was a sacrifice himself. But as we do not believe that all men sinned and fell, and that the whole race inherited this sin, we can see no need of a good man, like Jesus, even assuming him to be the son of the Great Spirit (which I do not) offering himself, in the form of the old superstitions, as a bloody sacrifice of atonement. What proof do you give me that he was the specially sent son of a spirit, the God of creation, whom no mortal man has ever so much as seen, as we believe, and, as you say, your own sacred books teach you?"

"He arose from the dead, after a horrible death on the cross, where he had been fastened with spikes, and pierced with spears."

"Who saw him arise?" asked the priest, quietly. "Did he appear in the temple and teach the people, as you tell me he did, before death? Did he go to the Roman rulers who had at first refused to condemn him? Did he appear to the Jewish priests who had sentenced him, as I am inclined to think, justly, for the awful crime of claiming to be the man-son of the one only pure God? Did he show himself publicly?"

"Did he, Tom? I think not; but he was seen by his disciples and many of his former followers."

"Ignorant, credulous believers reported that they saw him," interrupted Dick. "The Jewish priests, the Romans, and all the educated classes, whom, now-a-days, we look to for the truth or falsity of such statements, *never* admitted that he performed the miracle of rising from the dead. Once prove that he rose from the dead, and you establish the truth of your religion. Fail—and you must fail, for the occurrences of nineteen hundred years ago are not open to such proof as the present scientific age demands—and your religion of Jesus sinks to the level of Mohammed's, Joe Smith's and

Brigham Young's Mormonism, and the tricks of so-called Spiritualism, the modern miracles of the Virgin Mary, and all such forms of superstition. This age of star-eyed science does not accept the tales of ignorant fishermen."

"His teachings," I rejoined, "prove his divine origin, and the civilization which we enjoy, and which has come down to us through all these nineteen centuries, bears evidence of its heavenly birth."

"You cannot say, positively," replied Dick, "that we would not have had just the same civilization to-day as if Jesus Christ had never appeared. What culture had he? There is no evidence even in your own books that he could either read or write. He left no writings of any kind, and your Scriptures of the New Testament, my dear Harry, you must know, were written, some of them, hundreds of years after the events they claim to describe. The first and earliest one written was not penned till eighty or ninety years after Christ's death and burial."

Before I could speak, Mooza began again. he had listened earnestly to Dick.

"*We*, of these islands, do not believe in supernatural occurrences, in what you call miracles, my dear boy, for we hold that the good, all-loving God, reveals himself not through weak men's pens and tongues, as claimed by so-

called inspired persons and writers, but in Nature, and the regular laws of Nature, alone. Daily miracles of sunrise and sunset, the changes of the moon, the movements of those beautiful, far-off stars, that glitter through the night and fade at dawn; earthquakes, tempests on the land and ocean, the change of seasons, the birth and death of life—all these are miracles, and teach us to love and look up to and reverence the all-good, the all-knowing, and the all-caring God."

I bowed in silence, and then asked:

"You then believe that we shall live in other forms hereafter?"

The priest of Aliunde hesitated for a moment, and glanced sadly around at the eager young eyes that flashed out at this question, and hung upon the answer of the man of eighty years, whose footsteps sought the track of tombs.

"My dear friends, of a young and hopeful life, that I, alas! may never see completed, I answer you frankly, that our religion teaches the doctrine of the soul's immortality, and at what we call death, its immediate flight to other worlds beyond this; worlds of which we know absolutely nothing—nothing! No one has ever come back from them. The stillness of the dead gathers over those shores, and we but wait."

His venerable white head sank again upon his breast, and a long, weary sigh escaped him. His large, dark eyes fixed upon the earth in a sort of melancholy despair. Then he slowly rose, bowed to us all gravely, and walked away in solemn silence, his single, snowy robe trailing behind him on the short green grass.

For a long time no one spoke, till suddenly a boy touched me and Too-too on the bared shoulders.

Looking up, we saw the sun just above the verge of the horizon, and Mooza, his long, white robes and hair mingling together, kneeling far down the dusky greenery of the temple, as the last rays seemed to light up and glorify that face of saintly goodness. We turned, every one of us, and kneeled toward the dying day.

In Aliunde, they believe that God lives in the sun, that it is the abode of his visible presence. Can we say that it is not true—can we tell where in all the universe heaven lies, or where is the seat of Deity?

XIV.

EARLY one fine tropical morning—they have none such out of the tropics—a few weeks after this last conversation, Tom and I, having arisen early in consequence of a crashing storm that had burst over the island in the night, had gone down the valley to see if our gardens were all right. Not finding much damage done, we concluded to take a plunge in the tumbling, foamy creek, which had risen by reason of the storm, and was roaring, rushing, and making as much ado about nothing as a rural member of Congress addressing ten members, and a sleepy negro in the black gallery, on a rainy Saturday. Under a dark, weather-stained old rock, where the creek made a pretty cascade, we had just seated ourselves so that the cool, delicious water fell on our shoulders and clung to us as a garment of liquid delight, when, looking through our watery veil, we saw Zama and Too-too putting aside the fan-palms and caressing vines of the luxuriant vegetation, and coming toward us.

The roaring of the inflated, conceited little creek, which seemed to imagaine that it had suddenly become a large river, rendered conversation impossible. Too-too and his big brother noticing this, and getting up quite close, made gestures for us to come out, but fancying nothing unusual was in the wind, and by this time grown familiar with the demonstrative style and gestures of the natives, so full of grace and charm of manner, we declined, and beckoned them to come in, as there was room for just about four under the cascade. Stripping off their sashes and tossing aside the little woven black and buff straw caps they wore, they dashed in to us. Too-too was all excitement, and even the languid, voluptuous face of Zama lighted up with the beauty of eager expectation.

"What was the matter?" we asked. "What in the world had happened that the boys were out so early? Had the island loosed from its subterranean moorings, and begun to float into the waters of the sunset? Parrakeets and pet cockatoos—no! Had Zama's pretty girl-wife combed his masses of black, wavy hair with a ragged sea-shell, or had unmarried young Too-too been caught making love, as often chanced, to some nymph of the woods who had other lovers, or a batch of big brothers?"

"Not there, not there, mee cheild," as they say on the stage.

They cuddled up to us, and sat in our laps, plashing the foam around, as they told us of the joy of a trip their father, the chief, had promised them. They were to go to the neighboring island, where the grand council met at the seat of central authority, on a visit to some relatives, and Tom, Dick and I were to go with them, if Monaa, Lonaa and Coovaa could be persuaded to allow such latitude—would we go for a change of life?

"Would n't we, Tom?"

"Y'd better believe it, Harry boy; I want a little rest from the sweet satiety of this tropical love, even."

"You're not getting tired of the flowery yoke?" asked Too-too, slily.

"Oh no, not at all," we both hastened to assure him.

"Because, if you are," observed the young native, in the most cooing of Aliundean accents, "there are lovely girls in Launa-gola, the island we are to visit." And he smacked his lips and added something I cannot translate.

"Get out, Too-too—go wash your mouth, boy."

"And gather bananas," laughed Zama, "for your grandmother."

"How far is this island from us—how many days' journey?"

"Only about two—eh, Zama? you've been there."

"Just two, my bad brother of honey-tongues. One day in the canoe, and we land. One day through the palm trees and wild sugar-canes, and we are there, *ma lalaaga*."

Immediately we decided to go, if Dick, who affected to be very busy making experiments with coffee-berries, and trying to teach Lonaa to make French coffee, could be induced to accompany us.

"Oh, he'll go, I know," cried Too-too and his brother, in chorus. "If not, we'll go, anyway, eh, Toma, Harree?" he said, caressingly, pressing his cheeks to ours.

"We will, we will; let the baggage be packed; let the trumpets sound; unfurl the banners; the army will move on the enemy!"

Oo-lah! Oo-lah! cried the youthful islanders, with demonstrations of extreme delight; for their father had informed them that they could not go unless we agreed to accompany them. So we wrung the moisture and foam out of our hair, shook the trickling, cool drops from our bodies, and went up the valley of ferns, lilies and verdure, to the cottages, to wheedle our girl-wives into a jealous, half unwilling consent.

As we strolled along, we plucked the splendid white water lilies with hearts of gold, and made nosegays of gorgeous colors and huge size, as offerings at the domestic altar. This was done at the suggestion of the sly Too-too, who pointed out and helped to gather the flowers which were the greatest favorites of Coovaa and Lonaa. Such a fidget of delight the young rascal was in, that he kept Tom and me constantly laughing. Finally he mounted his brother's shoulders, and rode up like a monkey.

Preparations and bustle occupied us all that day, and Too-too was as frisky and frolicsome as a young squirrel. Coovaa did not want me to go.

There were sharks in the surf of far Naloo, and the canoe might upset us among them; and wild bees in Launa-gola, whose sting was the poison of arrows. "If the fierce sharks should tear your white skin, till the red blood stained the sea-foam, who then would love Coovaa—Coovanatto? Whose eyes at the gray of day-dawn would longingly turn for love's kisses? Whose lips, with the pout of pink sea-shells, would sigh for forgotten caresses—Coovaa—Coovanatto's! Whose voice, through the long, lingering night-time, when the ghosts of the dead fill the sky space, would wail for the clasp of warm arms and weep for the lost youth of love—Coovaa—

Coovanatto's!" Brown eyes as full of tears as the lilies that grow by the cascade were turned full upon me, beseeching, entreating and praying. Oh, Coovaa, Coovanatto! Breath-of-Roses!

"What is all this stuff and nonsense!" cried Tom and Zama, pushing their heads in at the open door, toward evening of the last day, and laughing at us.

"A venerable married man, just nineteen this very month, not allowed to leave his wife, and take a two days' trip to rest his heart from love's throbbings—tut! tut! Coovaa, Coovanatto!"

And then came Too-too, squeezing between the two handsome young athletes, and throwing his arms around their necks, and three heads with their laughing eyes wagged at us, and mocked us. Scarlet lips full of mirth, and glittering white teeth bared in beauty.

"Go away, all of you!" cried Coovaa.

"Go to! go to! gentlemen," I added, "go three!"

"I will protect the young man, Coovanatto, from the fierce-eating sharks of Naloo," cried Too-too, with a comical assumption of dash and patronage that made even Coovaa laugh.

"I will scare off the wild bees of Launa-gola, he shall kiss none but the ugly girls, and I'll

bring him back to you heart-hungry—I swear by the great sun at noonday."

"Go away, you bad boy—you Too-too! you mock like the tongue-men of Tonta, and your love is the down of thistles."

"Hootie-tootie!" cried Tom; "now do let him go, Coovanatto."

"We'll pack the young fellow in perfumed cotton, and we'll bring him back to you with his hair all tangled with rosebuds."

"On those conditions, Mrs. Coovaa, which seem to be as fair as the sweet-lipped maids of this island, you must allow me to go."

Finally I was granted permission, and having awakened very early, rose before even the birds were up who lived in the woods around us, and with whom Too-too and I (having been taught by him) had a bowing acquaintance, and used to exchange "good-mornings."

Coovaa still slept, the long jet fringes of her eyes trembling over the rosy restlessness of rounded cheeks. With one sweet arm under her head among its masses of tumbled, wavy hair, she lay a form of disrobed loveliness, dim in the dusky dawn.

Bending, I was about to touch the half-opened scarlet lips, when she moved slightly. I was fearful of awaking her, and stepped back on tip-toe, as Tom, Zama and Too-too came stealthily

down the path to the open door-way. We gathered up our spears and other things, closed the door, and started off.

"You young fellows—with wives—have much trouble to get out," observed Too-too, in English, with a great deal of deliberation, and a few strangling pauses, but on the whole, with a very good accent.

"Very good English, *ma lalaaga*," and I patted his shoulder, "very good, indeed."

"And you young scamps without any of the fearful and absorbing responsibilities of the domestic banana grove upon you, 'get out' whenever you like."

"Ah ha, Harree! the skies are free, and we fly as the wild ducks."

"Too-too is the boy who skirmishes around the frontiers," said Tom. "He understands the charm of woven fingers, and dropped eyelids, pouted rosy lips, and the coo, coo, cooing of sweetened voices."

"And how to steal bananas from his grandmother by moonlight," added Zama, caressing his brother and pressing his cheeks of peachy bloom to his own, proudly and laughingly.

"Boo-boo!" cried the youth, "I am but the heron's white feather, which drops as he flies, and sea breezes fan to the breast of the maiden."

As we reached the shore above the surf where

we were to embark in the double-canoe of the islands, all the early risers of the village crowded around us to wish us a joyous journey. It was the chief's vessel, and we had four natives to help us, and to bring it back, after conducting us across the bay or gulf which separated our island Koro kama from the larger one, Launa-gola, the seat of supreme government.

We glided off in the fresh morning with a slight breeze, and the natives set the sail as we sat in the stern, and Too-too and Zama sang thrilling songs of the sea. How delicious it all seemed! How the white-capped waves danced, and what a sparkle there was on the ocean, as the shores of Koro-kama, where we had been so happy, glided past us, and the cave of bridals with its glimpses of jagged, white rocks and hanging mantles of vines, and far off in the interior the blue peak of Val-da-vera which we had not seen before—a panorama of dreams, and peace, and beauty.

"Is n't it a fair land, this island home of ours?" asked Too-too, bending his neck around and looking me full in the eyes, while his own swam in languor. "Is the other world the sad-eyed old priests tell us of as bright and sweet as this, Harree boy? Oh, I'm *so* happy to-day!"

"More beautiful, Too-too, *ma lalaaga*—more beautiful than dreams."

"I don't believe it," replied the boy, as he threw himself on his back, and lying at full length looked up at the sky, so clear, and fresh, and blue, such intense, exquisite blue, with here and there a white cloud, fleecy and floating.

On the shore, slopes and mysterious green valleys, with tumbling cascades half covered with tangles of lush undergrowth and forest, now and then a patch of cultivated land for yams and taro plants, and distant-beckoning palms, cottages, and groves of mahogany trees which grow in clumps of fifteen or eighteen close together, while for quite a distance none of the same kind will be found; and foamy creeks making here and there, in the brown, rocky fissures, snowy waterfalls; in the background the dense green of the tropics—O beautiful world!

I lay down on the deck with Too-too. No one could surely wish for a fairer land, a sweeter home than this. As I had not been on the sea since our shipwreck, I began to feel an indescribable dread, when, after watching the sky and its clouds of piled cottony whiteness, with my head and eyes half shaded by the flat parasol-shaped hats of woven black and white straw the natives make, I suddenly turned and gazed shoreward. Fresh breezes had borne us

so swiftly, that there was no shore to be seen. It was back of us, but indistinct and dim.

"We shall land near a river on the island full of alligators," said Zama, talking to Tom.

"Good heavens!" I cried, starting up; "tell us about it, Zama."

"Oh, there 's no danger," he continued, reassuringly, and then he described a kind of lagoon at the mouth of this river, where the water was only five or six feet deep, in which the alligators congregated. Very sharp the old beasts are, too. And he told us, with much pantomime and acting, of this.

They have many dogs on the island of Launa-gola, which are much petted and loved. Now, the alligators are very fond of dog-meat, and catch and eat dogs when they attempt to cross the river. The dogs found this out, and the cunning way they cheated the alligators, said Zama, was to go in a pack and pick out a narrow place on the river. After selecting this, they would rush down the bank where the stream was wide, and bark and yell, and raise the very old row-de-dow generally. All the slimy, gray old alligators hearing this, and smacking their chops for a nice dog-lunch, would sail down to where the dogs kept up the yelping. When all the beasts got down there—they move slowly, you know—the cunning dogs would scamper and

scuttle up to the narrow part, and swim over in safety.

It was a kind of marine story. Tom said he did not believe it. Neither did Too-too—not a word of it.

"Did you ever see them at it, Zama?"

"No; but I knew a boy-chief whose uncle told him he had often seen the dogs do it. Fact."

And so we whiled away the time with talk, tales, and songs. Tom and Zama, proud of their splendid strength and physique, stripped off and helped with the paddles, when the sail hung listless, and called to me and Too-too to assist.

"I say, you two youngsters, take a hand here and help us."

We snored ostentatiously, and affected not to hear.

"What is the use of big, strapping, handsome bucks like them but to exert their strength?" whispered the young islander.

"It makes my head ache to work—I hate it as I would that personal devil of you Christians, Harree, if I believed in him. What a pity to keep him always in smoke and fire—poor fellow!"

Now, I had had such bad luck with the devil whenever I attempted to trot him out before Mooza, Dick, or the gay, light-hearted na-

tives, that I had really grown dead sick of him. I hoped there was no such personage. None of them believed in the devil, especially the personal one, and Tom and I had him all to ourselves.

"When he gets hold of those handsome legs of yours, you 'll believe in him, Too-too. When he drags you down to the gulf of fire and brimstone, and sets you to pitching coal to keep the everlasting fires burning, and turning roasting sinners forever!"

"When he gets these sinners you tell me about well cooked, what does he do with them, Harree—eat them?"

"How should I know," I replied, somewhat snappishly, for I saw Too-too's mocking smile; "I've never been to hell."

"Oh, I thought you had," said the youth, placidly, "you seem to know so much about it, *ma lalaaga*."

"No use attempting to convert these people to Christianity," I observed to Tom. "In their system they seem to have no earthly use for a devil at all."

"And so we leave him to the Christians to make fires for them in their cold country," laughed the Aliundean. And then he added: "If it is as cold where you come from, Harree boy, as you say, I should think that all the poor

people would want to go to the devil to get warm."

"Ah, wicked Too-too!" I replied, mournfully.

"If you people who believe in it want to keep up a good, strong fire down below, keep up a rigorous, well-organized hell, Harree, there 's no objection to it. But, my dear boy, *ma lalaaga*, don't attempt to drag us happy islanders down into it, and then lock the front door on us. We 've always got along very well without it—on account of our warm climate, I suppose."

He laughed.

Seeing I felt shocked and pained, and did not speak, he put his pretty, dimpled hand on my face, patted my cheeks softly, and began toying with my hair.

"Harree boy shall keep his own little devil, and have a nice, big hell of his own, so he shall. *Coroso! coroso!*"*

I gave up the task, and changed the subject.

It is very hard to make people believe in this fearful personage, if they haven't been brought up on him in early life.

* Lie still; lie still.

XV.

"LAUNA-GOLA! Launa-gola!" cried Zama, in delight, as, about sunset, we sighted the distant, purple shores of the island. The rest of our party had been lazily dozing and sipping the tart, native wine, for a breeze had sprung up, and we let the willing wind do the work of paddles. Skimming along the glancing blueness of the Pacific, we saw the yellow, rocky promontories and green-wooded slopes of the middle-mountain land, as the name signifies, and the dreaded river Zama had told us about spread out its alluring mouth before us. On the right and left of it, great beetling cliffs, stained with many colors, and their tops mantled in vines. No alligators were visible, and after sailing up about five miles we landed in safety. Mind, I do not undertake to say that they were not lying hidden in the smooth, silent water, but at all events we did not see them, and if they had determined to let us alone after spying out the strong points of our fast-sailing double canoe, we concluded

we would not stir them up with our spears, as Too-too suggested.

He said he wanted to see them whisk their tails, and hear them snort and blow. I never saw any alligators in the island waters. But they are like troubles—if they do not rise to attack you, it is best to sail over them in silence.

"Just so, Mr. Julian; just so," observed Tom, smiling.

"If Dick were here, now, he'd clap that down in his note-book of paper mulberry, for a lecture in the States, if we ever get back."

"Ah! and why didn't that handsome Hebrew come with us? His manner puzzled me as he declined. I like Dick very much, and haven't a particle of prejudice against him, as he knows full well, because he is a Jew. In fact, I should consider it an insult to be suspected of such low vulgarity. I have told him so dozens of times."

The Jews I regard as one of the grandest races in history. Christians (so-called) of the dark ages persecuted and destroyed them. With a patience and nobility worthy of highest praise, they submitted to it all. Vices they had, but caused mainly by Christian persecutions and tyranny.

I salute the Jews! I take off my hat to them.

"Well, Harry boy, when you get off your

stilts—enthusiasm is really very becoming to you—I'll tell you all about it."

"Go ahead, Tom."

"He thinks you and I, especially you, have taken a dislike to him of late, since the talks about religious questions."

"Nonsense! I don't expect everybody to think just as I do. Dick is a curly-haired, hard-headed, corrugated hippopotamus, and I must tell him so."

"Do, Harry; tell him so to his face, and then he 'll get over his sulks."

"If he and Mooza and the natives don't feel as if they could believe just as we do about certain matters (it 's a pity our lives don't correspond better with our belief), why, it 's their own lookout, you know, my boy. If they think they can get to heaven without a vigorous, personal devil to punch and push them up behind—well, *n'importe*. Just let them try it, Tom. But where are we to stop to-night? I see the four big natives who brought us over seem to be getting ready to return."

"Damfino," rejoined my friend, dropping into the pure Sanscrit, as taught by Mr. Dick Noah, who assured us he had it from an eminent professor of Oriental languages.

"What ho, without there! I say, Too-too, Zama, where are we to roost to-night, boys?"

"How do you expect poor Too-too to understand that kind of English, Tom? Ask him in his own tongue."

Being asked in his own tongue, the brothers told us that just up from the landing, about a mile, there lived a young chief, to whom they had sent word they were coming, and as it was a magnificent moonlight night (I see the moon now)—whoop! look at her—gorgeous! glorious queen of—

"Oh, dry up, Harry, till Zama tells us where we are to get supper."

Just up from the landing, on the hill, with the crest of palm and cocoanut trees, lived this young chief, and we were to walk up in the moonlight. The four native followers of Zama's father, our own most noble uncle, were directed to bring back the canoe, in the very same splendid moonlight of the ocean that we were to walk in. No aristocratic privileges allowed in these happy islands. The same kind of moonlight has to serve for both chief and boat-boy. That 's what we all liked about this fair land of deep-blue skies and starry nights.

Mr. Noah, who was so touchy that he didn't like to come over with us for fear of intruding, has paid some attention to the study of astronomy, and he assures me they have the finest article of moonshine in this latitude that he has

ever examined. About twelve ripe, round moons, besides quarters and halves, like the United States silver money, gladden the hearts of the lovers of Aliunde in the course of one year.

But to compare the moons of the tropics with the pale, sickly concerns they get up in the neighborhood of Washington—bah! And as for the moons of London and Edinburgh, which I've seen, I declare to you, as sure as my name is Julian, that you might easily credit the old story that the latter are really made of green cheese, if you had ever looked upon the rounded, gleamy, golden splendor that fills the nights of the Pacific seas. (Excuse my lunar enthusiasm.)

Under the aforesaid, we reached the house of the chief, to whom Zama presented us. How delightful it is to have such an ado made over you, as he bestowed on Tom and me! If we had been young gods, astray from the far-shining heights of Olympus, we could not have been received with more real distinction. I like being a stranger from a far land of white strangeness under such circumstances. But we have the proud satisfaction of knowing that the next people of our race who chance to visit that purple isle of the ocean will not meet with any such reception as we enjoyed. The charm is worn off, sir. *We* have tasted the first foamy draught

of the wine of surprise and novelty. The rest of you, no matter how good-looking, would be but second editions; poor, feeble imitations of the first and only genuine originals seen on the island. If you don't believe this, go there yourself and try it.

Like most of the younger class of natives of both sexes, our host was good-looking. He had the fine, wavy, glossy hair, oval face, regular features, and dark, intelligent, flashing eyes of our first friends. In complexion he was about the color of the upper class Japanese, with full, red lips, exquisite teeth, and rosy cheeks. Finely-developed legs, arms, chest, and a straight back, like those of Zama, Too-too, and our friends of Koro-kama, will finish his exterior as far as I can picture him to you. In truth, they look a good deal like Greek statues, slightly sunburned, such as you see in Rome.

If you 've never been in Rome—many people have not—you may safely take my word for it, as I can have no object in deceiving you. Fact.

Nearly all the natives of the Aliunde Islands that I saw have black, or rather different shades of dark-brown, eyes, and black hair; not coarse, straight, and greasy, like American Indians, but fine, glossy, and either waving or curly. They

admire curly hair, and the girls produce it by artificial means, just as ours do at home.

Light eyes, being almost unknown, or at least rare, are much esteemed, also. Tom's violet-blue ones and mine of light gray, as my polite friends style them, though they are really green, quite set us up in business with the natives. Dick's are dark, velvety brown. Our hair, too, was an object of surprise to the people of this country, as it was light brown. If I only had had a good curly stock of red hair on my head, I tell you I could have married the greatest heiress on the islands, the daughter of a chief of very exalted rank, who took quite a fancy to me.*

The natives, that is, those of high fashion, so much admire yellow, golden, and red hair, that when Tom, Dick, and I first discovered the fact, it was the only drawback to our perfect felicity that our parents hadn't ordered red hair for us when we were born. But that 's always the way with your parents; they never even give you the names *you* fancy. It is a wonder to me that they even put themselves to the trouble of bringing you into the world at all.

In Aliunde they often produce red or yellow-

* Afterwards died of heart disease because she could not find a man to marry with natural red hair. Fact. *Requiescat in pace.*

ish hair by artificial means, but like most imitations is rather a beastly sort of sham. How we fellows used to envy the red-headed chaps in the United States we had so often and often sneered at and laughed to scorn. And yet to think that those poor people at home are so little thought of, and even pitied, actually pitied, for having this rare red attraction!

When I told the more æsthetic classes of the young men of Kora-kama and Launa-gola of this prejudice, they could not repress their surprise. Their contempt they did succeed in concealing, being exceedingly polite, even to lame dogs and sick parrots.

The chief, Rahma, our host, after having feasted us with all the luxuries of his establishment, topped it off with delicious native wine, served by pretty girls, in small cups of lilac-tinted and pink shells, exquisitely polished, and mounted on stems of carved ebony. We sat cross-legged, on thick, yellow straw mats, and the supper took place in front of the house, in the moonlight, which was so dazzling that some torches provided were extinguished as an unnecessary, smoky nuisance.

I'm afraid that my esteemed friend Huntly took a little too much of that wine, for when the chief, next morning, was examining the color of our eyes by daylight, as a matter of curious nov-

elty to him, Mr. Huntly's eyes—well, it is not necessary to be too candid about one's travelling friends on festive, visiting occasions. I could say something also of the gay Too-too and the languid Zama, but forbear. It is not perfectly just and honorable to get tipsy with fellows and then go and tell all the queer things they said and did while in the society of Bacchus. All societies have their secrets. Let us respect them.

Thoughtful readers will remember that even the great and good Noah—an ancestor of our friend Dick by the father's side—once upon a time was put to bed in his boots, as we say now. (I mean no disrespect to either of the Noah family.) However, I think it was the moonshine that affected my head, as I was not accustomed then to moonlit banquets in the tropical islands. If I were asked to state on oath how and where we all slept that first night in Launa-gola, I should have to say, as the distinguished statesman and jurist of Louisiana calmly but defiantly remarked to an assorted committee of Congress, "I, Madison Wells, decline to answer."

And he was right. A man need not criminate himself. Let the jury find out; that's what they are paid for.

At all events, the hospitable Rahma gathered

us up laughingly in the cool of the morning, and breakfasted us.

We were to set out for the capital of the islands, about ten miles distant from Rahma's. As they have no horses in these regions—Noah, when he broke up housekeeping in the ark having forgotten them—we of course had to walk, and we started in the fresh coolness of the young day, so as to dash off five miles, and then lie over during the middle of the hot period for lunch and rest.

Stopping at the cottage of one of Rahma's friends, we fared quite sumptuously, without purple and fine linen—more of that sly, insidious native wine, though—and entered the capital, where the *Naalatoo*, or Chief of chiefs, resided, just as the sun, after a very successful and really brilliant performance of gilt-edged splendors, fell through a gulf of gorgeous, crimson clouds, streaked with great masses of woolly white and gold, and disappeared.

Those sunsets in Aliunde made my mouth water to look at them. No two alike, and all gotten up with such an utterly extravagant regardlessness of color that would have made the fortune of Italy. (Standing, one June Sunday, on Monte Pincio, in Rome, I saw the sun set behind Monte Mario in a style which faintly recalled the red and violet sunsets of Aliunde.)

XVI.

THOROUGHLY tired out with our tramp of ten miles—at least I was—in one day, we sank to sleep at the house of Zama's relative, and slept dreamlessly for hours. He had received us most cordially.

When we arrived, the grand council of the confederated islands was considering the all-important question of the future ruler, and who he was to be, after the counting of the balls.

Rahma, I soon learned, belonged to the black bone party, while Too-too and Zama were ardent white bone adherents. I was curious to study this interesting people in one of its most peculiar phases—a political earthquake. Zama and Rahma had been school-fellows together, pupils of the venerable Mooza, at the mountain of the sun, and though they differed politically, were, in other respects, apparently good friends. Our late host was five or six years older than Zama. Both sides were accused of cheating, and, as an independent foreigner, I may say, without wishing to

hurt the feelings of either, that I think, from all that I could gather, that the black bones were the greater tricksters of the two. And I am not at all influenced by my honorable friends, the boy chiefs, Zama and Too-too, in coming to this conclusion. We shall see as things proceed.

Representative chiefs of both parties had assembled from all parts of the Aliunde Islands when we arrived at the seat of government. Most of them were men of high character, and some of no character worth speaking about.

The place where they met was a kind of double amphitheatre; that is to say, there was a large amphitheatre made of grassy terraces, in the central portion of which the aged chiefs met. The people sat around upon the green slopes, looking down upon them. Just adjoining this was the other amphitheatre, for the younger chiefs, far enough removed to prevent the noisy orators of one body from being heard or interrupted by the other.

Large trees were planted in such a manner and carefully trimmed into arches, like the tree-temple of the sun, as to shade the terraced slopes where the people sat, as well as the central arena reserved for the representative chiefs. When it rained, if there happened to be some dry, windy man on his legs, they hailed it as a

good reason for adjourning, though the overhanging foliage was so dense that no drop could moisten even the dry speaker.

Many days of the session of the two bodies had already passed when our party arrived, and many fiery and exciting speeches had been made, but the mysterious question was as far off from settlement as ever. It seemed to stand thus: It had always been the custom in Aliunde, from time immemorial—in fact, ever since they had had a country—for the two bodies, the council of old chiefs and the assembly of young chiefs, to receive the boxes in which the little balls with which they voted were contained, and to open and count them. Now, however, as the black bones had a majority in the council of old chiefs, while the white bones had a majority in the assembly of young chiefs, the black bones having supreme control of the present government also, set up the bold claim that it was the duty, *the solemn duty*, of the oldest chief of the council to open the ball-boxes and count the balls himself, while the young chiefs might come around and sit among the old chiefs, if they could find space, and see him do it.

Such a mode of counting had never been heard of in all Aliunde before, and I well remember the amazement and indignation of my white bone friends when they first learned that this

system of tactics was to be set up by their opponents. Too-too, an ardent politician, though so young, was quick to see the danger of such a one-man doctrine, and actually stood on his handsome head with rage, till I had to take him by the heels and straighten him out. The ground for this utterly revolutionary claim of the baffled black bones, who had determined, at all hazards, not to give up the government, was simply this clause in their code of written laws:

"*The oldest chief shall open the boxes, and the balls shall then be counted.*"

Leaders of both parties at once saw that this was not explicit. Under it there was a very faint shading of color for the hitherto unheard-of assumption that the oldest chief should actually do the counting and decide as to what boxes were to be opened. Previous to this close contest, the oldest chief had merely acted as a kind of machine, by opening the boxes and handing them over to two selected chiefs from each body, who counted them.

A custom of hundreds of years also required the old chiefs of the country to climb the grassy terraces of the amphitheatre, and, with attendants armed with imposing spears, bear the sacred boxes into the assembly of young chiefs, who all rose and bowed till their elders were seated.

This venerable usage was to be sacrificed also to the exigency of partisan needs, and the young chiefs were to have a conch shell blown for them like a lot of laborers summoned from the fields to dinner. Then they might sit around on the outside terraces, and if any dispute or question arose as to what boxes were to be opened, or in what manner the balls should be counted, the oldest chief would save them all trouble by deciding that important question himself, without appeal.

The law was carefully examined and scrutinized. Had it been changed in any manner? No. Copies in all the various islands, read just as the one sacred original, which was kept by the custodians of the amphitheatres in a box of carved mahogany, well guarded.

"Why in the dickens," asked Tom, "did n't the old folks who made these laws say that the boxes should be opened by the oldest chief, and then counted by the two assemblies?"

"Ah! why did n't they?" exclaimed Too-too and Zama, "then we would have no trouble. This gammon about our grandfathers and grandmothers knowing so much more than we do, and being so much wiser, is all thistle-down—they don't know half so much, often, because in this case with them the law was an untried experi-

ment; with us, who have to live under it, and feel its yoke, it is an experiment tested."

"Too-too, don't get excited; the weather is too warm," observed Rahma, coolly; "the reason that the grandfathers did not say that the balls were to be counted by the two assemblages of chiefs was, that they did not intend to have them do it. That was the reason, *ma lalaaga*."

"Oh, thunder and earthquakes, Rahma!" cried Too-too, "you talk as the black bones, for you are of them—good fellow, though—and do not want to give up the power the people lent your party once to put down the rebellion in the cotton fields of Neybangoo. Talk to the parrots of Kora-kama about your law for the old chief to count all the votes! Would your party have once thought of setting up such a new-fangled doctrine, if it did not control the council of old chiefs and own them bodily? Suppose our party of white bones had been in the ascendant in the old chiefs' council, would your tongue-men of Tonta cry out on all sides for such an arrangement? No."

Rahma laughed, and patted Too-too's naked shoulders. "Keep your skin on, Too-too, *ma poo-pee-ah* (wild, gay boy), and don't get so hot-hearted. Let the girls of Launa-gola cool you with kisses. Love is for youth—law and councils for the old men and the chieftains."

"Boo-boo!" cried the poo-pee-ah, "I'll talk till the sun goes to bed, and shame the big men of the mountains. Then I'll kiss all the girls by moonlight, coo-coo!"

But youth was laughed away, and the elders talked of the sacredness of laws made by the grandfathers and the necessity of preserving order. Dread of another civil war, which had caused so much death and sorrow, was used also by the party in power to their own advantage. In the name of order, the protection of property, and the rights of labor, tyrants and aggressors always invade the domain of liberty, and seek to trample under foot the scales of justice (historical fact). Discussions and talks among the natives of opposing parties did not always end so good-naturedly as this; and many bloody noses and scratched shoulders showed where the strongest arguments had taken effect.

XVII.

All institutions of government in the Aliunde Islands are based upon the foundation principle, deeply imbedded, that the majority must rule. Destroy the universal faith in the saving efficacy of that old time primary axiom, said one of the chiefs of the council to me and Huntly, and you unsettle our whole system. Our simple machinery has been established merely for the purpose of ascertaining, from time to time, what are the wishes of the majority, and in selecting once every four years a grand supreme head or *Naalatoo*, which in our language means Chief of chiefs, for the purpose of carrying out the wishes of this many-headed majority by combining the power of many in a lofty oneness. Now we have been taught from boyhood to submit to this majority with the same perfect submission we formerly gave to the king, when we were under such government.

"I think," added the chief, "and so do many of our best men, that if, in getting rid of the

kings, we had been able to keep the central principle of fixity and order by making the supreme chiefship hereditary or elective for life, we might have been spared many troubles. Our good grandfathers, in putting into operation their pet theories of a free, self-acting government of the people, extended their hands into the dark very often, as it were."

"How so?" we asked, as the chief spoke rapidly, and, I observed, used a good many words that were somewhat new to me and my friend. I feared we did not always get his meaning clearly.

"For instance," he replied, "we had a terrible, desolating civil war, not many years ago: all, *I* think, owing to the same looseness of language in our code of laws, which seems again on the point of plunging us into bloodshed. Our islands are bound together in one government, and if the old grandfatherly law had expressly prohibited any one island from ever, under any circumstances, withdrawing, we probably would have had no war. As it was, certain islands did not like the *Naalatoo* elected on a memorable occasion, and determined to secede and set up a separate establishment. They interpreted a want of explicitness in the code into a permission to break the sworn compact. The remain-

der of us attempted to force them to keep it—to stay with us—and succeeded."

"It is a forced yoke, then?" I asked.

"In a certain sense, yes; but it is hoped by a wise, conciliating policy to win the former brothers back to us by love. Unfortunately, this close contest for the much coveted place of *Naalatoo* now comes up, and as most of the chiefs formerly in rebellion support the white bone leader, in opposition to the black bone party now in power, I tremble once more for the peace of the islands."

After many speeches and much windy declamation, the two bodies constituting the grand council finally concluded that if the pet policy of the old chiefs were to be carried out in counting the balls, then, of course, the young chiefs would attempt to execute their law, as they understood it, and so the Aliunde Islands, instead of having one Chief of chiefs, one recognized head, would very likely have two, and a war, to boot.

Well, then, we must compromise it, the wise men said. Each side will give in a little, and for the general good of the whole people of the country, just recovering from the desolation of former battles, we will select a body of, say, five chiefs from the white bone party, five from the black bone side, and four priests of the sun,

two of each of the contending parties. That would give a council of reference, composed of seven men favoring the white bone chieftain, and seven inclining to the leader of the black bones. They would never agree, of course, and then it was determined to allow the four priests to choose one person, of such admirably-balanced political opinions that he would be able to throw the shadows of prejudice far behind him as he faced the sun of justice and fair dealing, and decide all disputed points between the asserted lawlessness and force of one side, and the trickery and sharp practice of the other. A beautiful human theory, if the champion just man could ever be found.

"A very delightful way of settling the dispute," I said to Too-too and Zama.

"Oh, yes; if you only knew whom the four priests would select."

That was the point.

Now, the poor white bone party—knowing that they had fairly and honestly elected their chief, though they could not prove it, because all the ball-boxes, which, if properly counted, would establish it, were in the hands of their adversaries, and these same cunning, unscrupulous men were in such a position as to make use of the weak old *Naalatoo* at the head of the government—did not know what to do.

This same old *Naalatoo* had even ordered spearmen from the neighboring island of Tallatassee—I saw large bodies of them myself, half concealed among the cocoanut and mango trees near the amphitheatres—so as to intimidate and overawe the young chiefs of the white bone party, if they dared to set up their choice against the wishes of the old chieftains of the council. I told them we never did such things in my country.

Strange and altogether unheard of as the theory was, that the oldest of all the chiefs had the exclusive power to not only open (which nobody denied), but also to count or reject the balls in the boxes, yet, as soon as it was advanced, there were found fluent tongue-men in all directions to assert, in the most positive manner, that this had always been the custom in Aliunde! As a matter of fact, this was a lie, and these tongue-men knew it to be so when they broached it.

The thoughtful traveller cannot help congratulating himself on the lofty superiority of his own beloved country to the beloved country of all other nations.

Let us proceed to congratulate.

XVIII.

SURROUNDED by all these embarrassing obstacles, it is no wonder, I thought, that the chiefs of the white bone party—at least the majority of them, for many held out in opposition to it to the bitter end—finally agreed to submit the question as to who was elected *Naalatoo* to the arbitrament of the council of fifteen.

This council, as stated before, was to be composed of five eminent chiefs of the white bones, five similarly eminent men of the other party, two white bone priests, and two black bone priests, and the four priests were to select the fifteenth man, from a certain body which were all well-known black bone sympathizers, but supposed by every man in the islands (a population of several hundred thousand), except three or four, to be so fair, so honorable, that they would decide against their own party—yea, verily, walk miles to do it—rather than sacrifice one iota of the most infinitesimal dimensions of justice and truth. Fact.

After a good deal of debate and discussion, we learned that the all-important fifteenth man was selected, and everybody seemed delighted. Free, self-acting government of the people, by the machines of the people—the tongue-men—for the government of the peoples, for the benefit of mankind in general, was a great success, after all. Hurrah!

We threw up our caps of gorgeous parrots' feathers, with their little knots of rose-coral, from which were suspended flowing plumes of the floating bird-of-paradise feathers, and cheered as lustily as Zama, Too-too, or any of the other young bucks of the islands. Hadn't we been naturalized and adopted as citizens and voters on the very first day of our arrival? Certainly.

"Oolah! oo-lah!" then we cried, as loudly as any of the gay and animated groups of natives gathered under the cool, green foliage of the trees of the amphitheatre. "Oo-lah! oo-lah! Peace forever!"

We did not want a war. We had heard too much about such national recreations. Peace was our strong point. Tom feared that he might get a spear-cut, a scar, on that handsome pink-and-white oval face he carried around with him. *I* had religious, very religious, scruples about war. Mooza's religion was the one for me—

love first, and peace afterward, and plenty of it.

After the contending chiefs had decided to settle things in this high-toned manner, joy and jubilation once more abounded on all sides. We attended several moonlit feasts and banquets, and learned to dance the enchanting, all-alluring national dance, the kaa-lu-lah. This dance is as well known to all the young men and girls of Launa-gola and the other islands of the group as the waltz is with us at home. Nevertheless, it is difficult to describe. You never can describe a dance satisfactorily unless you dance it as an illustration, any more than you can picture the falls of Niagara to any one who has never seen a fall, or the Alps at sunset—first view, I mean—when they seem like piles of frozen rainbows. So you will have to excuse me on the kaa-lu-lah. The priests of the sun, especially good, kind old Mooza, preach powerfully against it, just as the priests and clergy at home preach against round dances. The resulting influence in both and all cases is just about the same—nothing.

Zama pointed out to me once, in Launa-gola, a youth of beautiful head and face, who had excited a great deal of comment, I noticed, because he did not dance the kaa-lu-lah. Boys and young men from all sides, after the flute and

drum music ceased, gathered around to stare at him. News had spread on all sides that here, here, at last, was one fellow who would not dance the national dance. Treason!

Half-a-dozen different native bucks of my acquaintance, dandies of the brightest sashes, too, tapped me on the shoulder to point out this poor fellow. It was just as if a young man from the rural regions of, say, Illinois, had appeared at a Washington reception in a yellow coat and brass buttons. Finally, the secret leaked out, the poor youth was lame. That was the reason, the only reason, for not dancing the national dance of Aliunde.

These natives are a very gay people, even the elderly ones, and throw care and trouble overboard on the slightest provocation. In fact, they go about looking for provocations.

Well, the kaa-lu-lah is danced at night, on shining sands, beneath the round, gorgeous moon of the tropics, to the beat of drums, the cooing of bamboo flutes, and the wild whirl of barbaric music; there are waving hands, and beckoning arms, and chasing feet, flying sashes, and—but I think I'll say no more about it. Some of the figures don't look much worse, though, than the waltz or the galop.

XIX.

The all-absorbing *Naalatoo* question had so occupied us, as well as the natives, that we had not looked around as much as strangers are expected to do. We now went out to see the residence or palace of the Chief of chiefs. Exactly one of our miles from the bowery domes and leafy arches of the amphitheatre, where the notables of the islands meet, stretches a wide avenue of palms and tamarind trees, planted alternately, and straight as the life of a truly good man. Grass, as fine as moss, almost, close-shaven and green, covers this level space. At the end of it is the palace, built of huge blocks of ebony and a sort of bright bird's-eye maple, exquisitely polished and oiled. The blocks are arranged something like the front of the Doge's Palace, or Palazzo Ducale, at Venice (you 've seen that, of course).

They do not build with stone on the islands, on account of earthquakes, which, though never very rude, occasionally throw stones down. The

residence of the Aliundean ruler, though only one lofty story in height, is quite extensive, and is surrounded by piazzas, the pillars of which are of polished rosewood, with capitals of a curiously-formed white coral. Completely inclosing the grounds and gardens of the palace are fragrant hedges and all the choicest flowering shrubs of the islands, so that when the sun shines on this wall of verdure and flowers, it seems as if built of piles of tropic blooms.

We were received by the *Naalatoo* in an interior sort of court of flowers, the floor covered with green moss, a small basin of gold fish in the center of it. Rahma, Too-too, and Zama accompanied us. Tom and I had stained all our nails rose color, as was the fashion at the capital; wore two sashes, one of snowy, foamy white, and over this a lustrous scarlet; ankle and wrist ornaments of carved and polished mother-of-pearl, as beautiful as opals; and the national round cap, slightly peaked, made of moss-green and crimson feathers, and topped with small knots of pink coral, ornamented with plumes of bird-of-paradise feathers. Spears of carved rosewood, about six feet in length, with dangling tassels of parrots' feathers, completed our outfit. These spears are borne just as we carry canes or dress-swords.

The three natives were similarly attired, ex-

cept that Too-too's cap was of dazzling white cockatoo feathers, closely woven, as they all are, till it resembled the breast of the bird, and the crest was a stuffed humming-bird of glittering beauty, set on so that the exquisite little thing with extended wings was constantly in motion. He had it from his latest sweetheart, a girl of Launa-gola, and had given, or lent her, his heart in return.

The old *Naalatoo* struck us as rather heavy and stupid-looking, but received Tom and me, being strangers, very cordially. We walked up to him, bowed, and offered both hands, which he pressed. He sat cross-legged on a fine mat, and invited us to be seated opposite. He did not rise.

"He can't talk," as Too-too said, "and does not seem to try, knowing his failing. The owl passed for a remarkably wise bird," added the youth, "until he forgot his part one day, and opened his bill."

My youthful friend, belonging to the opposite party, is, I fear, somewhat prejudiced against this old man.

"Ah, you should have seen the dead chief of the late rebellion, who was overpowered by this one," observed Zama, as we quitted the palace, and his languid, voluptuous beauty lighted up with a splendid young enthusiasm. "Such a

look! such eyes of glory! such an air of command!"

"Let us bury the dead past, Zama," observed Rahma, uneasily, who was of the ruling party. "Can we ever forget that we are still brothers, though we once fought together?"

"It is easier for those who conquer than for those conquered to forget," replied Too-too, proudly and coldly, "*but we will try.*"

The chief ruler had asked us many questions of our far-off land of snow-storms, but seemed especially interested in a rare breed of bull-pups playing about the mats, some one had just sent him, and as Tom is fond of such pets, the two grew quite enthusiastic over the little black-nosed beasts.

Now, as I hate bull-pups, I was beginning to get somewhat bored, but revenged myself by the most careful inspection of all the surroundings, the face of the *Naalatoo*, his dull, heavy eye, occasionally lighted up with bull-puppyism, as he talked with the handsome Tom, the bloated, coarse cheeks, and the heavy look generally of the ruler of all the Aliunde Islands.

"By Jove, Too-too! how in the name of common sense and the eternal fitness of things, did such a man as that ever get to be Supreme Chief of chiefs over such a bright people as yours?"

The *poo-pee-ah* tossed his fine head scornfully, and looked back over his shoulder in the direction of the palace. Then he approached me closely, and threw his arm around my neck, as he whispered in my ears, with hot breath:

"I will ask of the sun at mid-day, or the stars that glitter on the dark breast of night, and see if they will tell me, for I do not know. But he was once a great general, they tell me; that is, he had an unlimited number of men, well fed and well armed, while the dead chief of the rebellion had few men, poorly armed and badly fed. Having plenty of men, he could afford to sacrifice many, as he did relentlessly, and that was his way. If I take a thousand warriors and with them kill some hundreds of the enemy, losing five or six hundred in doing it, nobody cares for the five or six hundred lost, if I win a victory. That was his generalship, Harree, friend of my forehead."

I began laughing at Too too, and we dropped the subject, as he added that the people who wanted peace to cultivate their fields of sugar-cane, cotton, tobacco, and plantains were so much pleased with the last man who had brought the civil war to a close—though many other chiefs had shown more military skill—that they made him Chief of chiefs—*Naalatoo*, the Successful.

He seemed, from what Too-too and Zama told me, and even Rahma did not contradict it, to have been placed at the head of the armies when both sides were thoroughly tired out and weary of the war, and as the end came, he reaped all the success to which his predecessors had so much contributed. They did the hard work of the heat of the day, and then he arrived about sunset and carried off all the fruit and the glory. At least that was the way Zama and Too-too and their side put it, for they reflected, I observed, the talk of their fathers and elders of the opposition party.

"As at this time he did not have long to serve —a few weeks only—and would have to give up the reins of power to his successor, when the council of fifteen selected him, people were already beginning to speak more charitably of him than they had done when he was in the full flush of strength, and had many years to wield it. He had many brothers-in-law to fall back upon.

"We do not feel so bitter toward the old, lame, half-blind dog, which has bitten us, as we would if he had his former fangs," said Too-too.

XX.

WELL, the tribunal or council of fifteen had, at length, selected a member from the wise body previously mentioned. Everything was now ready for the counting of the little black and white balls contained in the boxes. In Aliunde the old wise men from whom the fifteenth person was selected, dress in such a manner that it is impossible to tell them from women. Just as our Supreme Court judges are attired in long, black silk gowns, and look like a tea-party of old women at a little distance.

"I don't think so," said Tom.

"Well, it's none of your business, anyway; just attend to your bull-pups, and don't interrupt me and Too-too while we are discussing politics."

"We'd better knock both their heads together, I think, Zama," was my friend's laughing reply; "chaps like them not out of their teens yet, and with just a little silky floss on their upper lips, talking politics—bah! Leave it to us men."

"One does n't need a mustache to talk," rejoined Too-too; "it takes heads."

"Do we see any such heads about us?" replied Zama and Tom, looking all around over the tops of ours, like Diogenes in search of an honest man.

"It's a pity Toma and Zama are so big, Harree; what a thrashing they would get, if it were n't for that."

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be otherwise," I replied.

"Oh, hit some one of your own size, Harry," observed Mr. Huntly, with patronizing dignity.

One morning, as we young fellows were lying sucking oranges, on the close-cut mossy grass of the long avenue leading up to the amphitheatre —a favorite resort of the youths—we heard the drums beat. We half rose lazily to our elbows, arranged our sashes as gracefully as possible, and saw the national flag, a square of sky-blue with a golden-rayed sun in the center, slowly sail up the flag-staff. This was the signal for the assemblage of the council of fifteen, and some half-dozen of us who took an interest in public affairs, started to go down to the amphitheatre to attend its meeting and see the fun, as we regarded it, of counting the little black and white balls.

Five or six of the young bucks, however, did not care anything about such matters, and as

they saw a party of girls going off to the woods to gather flowers for their glossy black hair, concluded that it would be much nicer to follow them than to go and listen to a lot of long, dry speeches, from the elderly chiefs. As the girls had looked back over their shoulders in a coquettish kind of way, just as girls do all the world over, the young fellows—so like the same idle class at home—were not so much to blame, after all. So they followed them, and our lively, chatting group separated.

"Confound the political troubles!" cried the handsome youths, looking longingly after the bevy of girls. "Let the old folks settle them, and we'll settle the young folks."

Half-a-dozen of us then concluded to look after the political situation, Too-too going with us. Zama and Tom did not accompany our party. I believe they said to us that they were going to see the old *Naalatoo's* pet bull-pups again; but as soon as Too-too and I were out of sight, we heard afterward that they joined the young bucks and the girls, and went to the woods to gather flowers. So much like young married men at home, I thought. But boys will be boys, and you can't make anything else out of them. Zama and Huntly were just the same age, about twenty.

How cool and nice the place of meeting of

the council looked! As I have before stated, these spacious amphitheatres were composed of regular grassy terraces, and around the edge of each terrace were planted immense trees, which had been freshly trimmed out so as to form regular arches, like the roof of Westminster Abbey, and other cathedrals. As the branches were so thick, and the foliage so dense, this of course gave them a hall of splendid greenery, supported at regular intervals by great brown trunks of trees. In the center or arena of each of the two amphitheatres upon which we looked down as we sat on the grassy terraces, there was a space of about one hundred feet in diameter.

The circle of huge trees planted regularly around this had had their branches cut out so as to form a green dome with an opening of about thirty feet, just like the Pantheon at Rome, through which, looking up, the intense exquisite blue of the tropic sky could be seen. The natives have long ropes of the hemp of the islands, that they attach to the boughs of these trees, and from which young men suspend themselves on swinging seats, in cutting and trimming this legislative hall. The class corresponding to our department clerks in Washington, usually attends to it. Hence the name they go by, of "trimmers."

Instead of enormous taxes to pile up costly stone buildings, for the meeting of their legisla-

tive bodies, the Aliundeans let good mother Nature do all the work for them; and though I have seen the Senate and House of the Capitol at Washington, the Houses of Lords and Commons in London, and the theatre at Versailles,* in which the French play at a republic, I don't think I was really so much impressed as I was that morning in Launa-gola, when I sat down and curiously studied the lordly, lofty sweep of this domed palace of dense, living green trees. The fine art with which it was all carefully trimmed and kept impressed me very highly.

Then it cost so little, and was intended, as one of the elderly chiefs afterward told me, to symbolize to the populace the simple forms and expenseless modes of government by the people. An immense crowd had assembled. A gay bustle of talk and flutters of airy laughter filled all the verdurous palace as the council took their seats on mats of buff, black and white straw, of pretty checkers and squares. When all were seated, the drum was struck again. A deep silence fell on the whole audience, for these people exact extreme reverence for all the forms of law and semblance of authority. The grand council, which was to settle all contested points relative to the disputed succession to the seat of

* The deputies, or national assembly of France meet in the old theatre of Louis XIV. at Versailles.

the great and good *Naalatoo* of early days—a council that had never been needed before—had been at last formally opened with loud cries of *Oo lah! Oo-lah!*

The tongue-men of the white bone party, and those who were to represent the other side, were to make speeches, and present all the points of dispute to the council of fifteen. Then, after hearing all the arguments from both sides, the fifteen were to decide the knotty question according to the high principles of justice and equity.

Too-too, and I, and our party of youths, did not pay much attention to these speeches, as we knew all the points in dispute by heart. In fact, I may say that every man, woman and small boy in the islands had been bored into headaches by the ceaseless discussion of these topics, which had been going on ever since the Kaowalla or election.

So we occupied our time by looking at, and examining the members of the council. It is a custom of the country here to require a public man to brand himself with a black spot on the forehead each time he changes position on any great political question. Noticing one of the chiefs who bore a very strong resemblance to our Senator Morton of Indiana (how apt the thoughtful traveller is to trace resemblances between the governing representative men of his own and

other countries), noticing one of these men, I say, who seemed to have black spots all over his forehead, and even one on his cheek—there being no more room on the forehead—I asked Too-too what it meant. Was it merely a sort of ornamental tattooing, or did it signify something? (Never be ashamed to ask questions, when away from home—I've learned a good deal by this.)

"Oh, that old rooster!" cried the youth, laughing, at first; then immediately sobering down and becoming very indignant, though for fear of disturbing those around us, speaking low—"that is one of the most eminently unprincipled of all the black bone party. He has been on all sides of all questions for the last twenty years. If his influence with the people were in any degree equal to his agility in turning political somersaults, he would be one of our greatest leaders—or rather one of *their* greatest. I detest him. Do you see those crutches he walks with?"

"Yes, I see them now; I did n't at first."

"Well, they say he's as fickle and as much given to turning somersaults in love affairs, as in affairs political. They now call it rheumatism, I believe."

"Too-too! Too-too!"

"Well, did n't you ask me, Harree boy? If you don't want to read the news, you ought n't

to open the newspapers, as you would say in your cold country of snowflakes."

"All right, *ma lalaaga.* I thank you for the illustration." I had been telling him about newspapers and news people.

"That man," continued my friend, "made the fiercest speeches of the whole gang of conspirators against this reference mode of settling this disputed question, asserting that the law about the right of the oldest chief to open the boxes and count the balls was so clear that this way of settling it could not and would not be lawful, and he, for one, was bitterly opposed to it. Now you see the old alligator is one of the judges. Ten months ago he snorted around all the islands, just like the tongue-men of Tonta (those political prostitutes), urging the people to agree to a law absolutely forbidding the oldest chief from having anything to do with the ball-boxes, except to look at the outside of them. Then it was not necessary to make this claim for the benefit of his rascally party."

"My dear Too-too, let me feel the pulse of that handsome wrist of yours. I'm afraid you are getting excited, *ma poo-pee-ah.* How cool the balmy breeze comes to us under these green leaves."

"Well, who wouldn't get indignant, Harree,

when they see such tricksters, such party swindlers, having power."

"Oh, this council of wise old chiefs will see that justice is done your white bone party. If they have outnumbered the black bones, it will appear, my dear boy, when they open the boxes, and count the balls."

"That fifteenth person they have selected, looks to me like an old woman," observed the restless youth, abruptly.

"An old woman?" I repeated, in astonishment; "why, does not the law say they shall choose a man?"

"I don't think the law mentions the word *man*," replied Too-too. "The body of wise old people they had to pick from look and get themselves up so much like a party of old women, that I can't tell one from the other half the time."

"How can it ever be found out, then?"

"Oh, I suppose we shall have to wait and see how they decide the questions to come up before them. That may indicate it."

"But by the sun of high noon! Harree, that fifteenth one is an old woman, or I am—no boy."

"Tut! tut! Too-too, you took too much wine this morning."

"Not I, *ma lalaaga:* I have n't tasted wine

to-day. Number fifteen *is* an old woman, and they will scare him by dread of another war, and he'll decide for the chiefs now in power."

"We shall see, Too-too, old boy, we shall see."

After the speeches were finished, the counting began, and we pricked up our ears. They do not encourage long speeches in Aliunde, but when they think a man has talked enough, they all lie over on their backs, and affect to snore so prodigiously that even the boldest speaker becomes disconcerted and stops—(fact). Well, the count proceeded well enough, and both parties were satisfied, until they came to the two disputed islands, which had occasioned all the trouble, Oasiana and Loridaa. Two boxes had been sent from each of them, purporting to be the genuine results of the election held by the chiefs as ordered by law.

It is customary to inscribe on the lids of these boxes the number of balls within. For instance, as it was explained to me, the boxes of chief Toldano, leader of the white bones, would be marked white balls 1040; black balls, 620; 420 balls for Toldano. Hawassi, the chief of the black bones, required all the disputed balls before he could be made *Naalatoo*. Toldano only needed one box from either Oasiana or Loridaa. As the black bone party managers had charge of

things in both of these islands, they had sent up boxes marked so as to show that a majority of the balls had been given for Hawassi, and inscribed their names on the lids as proof, but the Toldano party asserted that if these lids were raised, and the balls counted, it would be found that the inscriptions on the lids were falsely placed there. Now every one in the islands supposed that the grand council of fifteen had been gotten up especially to settle this disputed question by opening the boxes and counting the balls in them, in the presence of representative chiefs of both sides.

Fancy the astonishment of Toldano's side, however, when the council of arbitration, after talking the subject over ten days and nights, until everybody snored like small thunder, finally came to the grand, high conclusion, that, as the chiefs ruling in the islands of Oasiana and Loridaa had stated on the lids of the boxes that a majority of balls had been cast for chief Hawassi, it would be a gross insult to the black bone chiefs of those islands to open and count after them. They decided, therefore, "We can't go under the lids, for fear of another war!"

It is impossible to picture the rage of the Toldanoans. Why, they cried, we have here hundreds of men to swear that the black bone man-

agers in Oasiana inscribed the box falsely, and that it of right belongs to Toldano; instead of being sent to the Capitol marked for Hawassi, it should have been for Toldano. By the One who sleeps in the Sunset!—the most solemn oath an islander can take—we will prove this if you will only open the boxes, look in, and count the balls that lie before you.

"*We can't go under the lids!*" was the monotonous answer to all appeals. "If the figures inscribed on the lids are false, they are certified to by the governing chiefs of those islands and must stand. If there has been cheating, we cannot investigate it. Seven white bone chiefs of the council voted to raise the lids, and have a fair count. If the statements of their party were wrong, this would determine the question at once, and they would abide by it.

Seven chiefs of the black bones voted not to raise the lids, as they did not want the cheating exposed, as it would be by counting, and the fifteenth member of the council voted with his friends, the black bones, not to open the lids and count.

"You cannot go under the lids," he said, "because if you do, and the statements of the white bone party are found to be correct, the whole government of the Aliunde Islands will have to be turned over to the party of Toldano, and all

the black bone chiefs will be at once displaced. Peace is better than justice. Let us have peace."

Both parties had primarily agreed solemnly, in the presence of all the people, to submit to the decision of this grand high council, no matter what its verdict might be. But, said Toldano's party, this settles nothing. They admit a cheat by refusing to examine and investigate it. We say the boxes will not bear examination, and defy them to open and count the contents. No, says your grand council; if there is a cheat, which we do not undertake to decide, the thing must stand. What if the chiefs who certified to the lids of these boxes being correctly inscribed were men of no character, thieves, and robbers, and plunderers of the people?

"No matter," said the eight to the seven, who wanted to open the lids. "We have no right to go under the lids."

And this was the wearisome, monotonous refrain of the eight to the seven; and no arguments could move that fifteenth vote, which was really the deciding one of the council.

The young chiefs of the white bones were naturally furious. We will not abide by this trickery. This fifteenth person is perhaps an old woman, and has been frightened into all this by the fear of another war. They know that a

majority of the people have solemnly decided to give the government of the islands to Toldano, and rather than give up their power and places, they cheat us out of our victory by this jugglery. Why, if we had known that they would refuse to investigate the fraud we charged, we would not have gone into such an agreement at all. Let us throw their foolish and cowardly trick to the winds and take what we have won. But the old wise chiefs of the Toldanoans opposed this. It will bring on another war, perhaps, and we must have peace.

"Peace even before justice?" cried the young chiefs, enraged with their own party friends; "that is the decision of the old woman of the council, but it is not the policy of men."

Such is the reverence of these people for even the form of law, however, though its principle be absent, that the leaders and chiefs of the gallant white bones acquiesced in this unjust decision of the grand council of arbitration without a murmur. We will sacrifice our party's victory to our country. We submit and bow to the forms of law we have created. *Our right to the government of the islands we waive rather than one of the very humblest of our countrymen should spill a drop of his blood for us or on our account.*

The footsteps of justice are slow. We stand bloodless, and await her coming.

A splendid race of people! A race fit for self-government, when they can thus curb and govern themselves in the very flush of a known victory!

This decision of the Toldanoans was all the more to their honor, since many of the chiefs of the other party of the highest rank and purity of character hung their heads when they heard the victory had been awarded to them. They were really ashamed to accept it under such circumstances. And no wonder. But in all countries such men form a small, a very small minority of any party. In my own happy land of the bald-headed eagle (a bird noted for stealing all it can lay its claws on), such a fraud as the poor Toldanoans submitted to could not have been practiced at all—unless on a very dark night.

I remarked as much to sad Too-too, who fixed his teeth firmly and stood by the decision, like a small boy taking a dose of castor-oil. (Poor, beautiful Too-too—I felt so sorry for him.) Zama, usually so calm and lazily indifferent, flashed up into a splendid passion. Tom also took sides with him, chivalrously defending the men who had been so grossly defrauded of their hard-won victory, but yet who submitted to law, or rather the sham forms of it,

so nobly, and acted the role of martyrs so grandly.

I must say, for myself, that I felt the deepest sympathy for the party of my young friends, for I saw that rather than go to war they had been bullied into an arrangement by which they virtually submitted their case to an unscrupulous enemy, who cared not how power was acquired, so it was acquired.

"Mak' money, Jock; honestly, if ye can, but mak' money."

That was the substance of the talk of their party chiefs, and they acted upon it.

XXI.

THE grand excitement being over, we began to get ready to return to our homes in Korokama. Next week after the decision, the installation of the *Naalatoo* was to take place. Zama and Too-too had no heart to stay and see it, and though Huntly and I may have felt some little curiosity as strangers, we had too much real regard for these kind-hearted boys, who had treated us so generously and nobly, to mention the subject, when we saw that their hearts were so sore over the defeat. Word had been sent to Zama by his father, the chief, that the double canoe would await us at the river of alligators where we had landed.

All the forests, and roads, and paths leading to the capital began to fill with eager crowds, coming to see the new man assume the reins of power. Well, we took leave of the many pleasant natives we had met, and started away one bright morning for the coast. Rahma offered to accompany us, but the brothers, our friends and

cousins, under some polite pretext, declined his hospitalities. Too-too explained that Rahma, being of the victorious party, his presence was galling. His very politeness and courtesy seemed patronizing insolence.

"I hate the whole gang of them," cried the youth, with indignant energy, "and want to get away among my own party friends, so that I can blaze out occasionally. I should have to treat Rahma politely, and I feel now too angry to be polite to the rascals who have just stopped us on the high road of success and robbed us. Don't you, Zama?"

"My pet brother is right," replied the elder, putting his arm around Too-too's neck, and pressing him to his heart. "Poor *poo-pee-ah*," he added, as the boy's beautiful dark eyes half swam in moistened eyelids.

The affection of these brothers for each other touched me and Tom, and we looked on in tender sympathy. Our thoughts are often so odd, though. If these boys were not fastidiously neat and cleanly in their persons, I said to myself, and if they were not so handsome in face and form, this sort of caressing and petting of each other would be almost disgusting. As it was, it seemed as natural and attractive as if they had been two pretty girls.

In the beautiful, O Mother Nature, we can

forgive and admire almost everything. In the ugly, even fine displays of emotion seem to be absurd.

"Just so, Mr. Julian," cried Tom, slapping me heartily on the shoulder; "you speak like a printed book, or the New York *Tribune*."

Another friend of our two youths, who lived quite as near to our place of embarkation as Rahma, had been insisting that our party of four should go home with him. Too-too and Zama were popular with all the young chiefs of rank, and out of several invitations to stay for weeks selected the near neighbor of Rahma, he being an ardent adherent of Toldano, and one with whom they could talk with sympathetic freedom. Accompanied by a large party of youthful natives of Launa-gola as an escort, we started off for the coast.

As we moved down the rocky, tangled valley, near the home of our host that was to be, we saw our canoe skimming along over the glassy waters to meet us. We stayed but one night with the hospitable young chief who had invited us, and the next day embarked. All the fellows who had so kindly escorted us to the seashore, and who had been invited to stay and see us off, had pressed their cheeks to ours, holding both hands in theirs, and then gathered in groups under the palm trees.

Our double canoe, with its platform deck built over and coupling the two vessels, had her sails set. We stood on this deck, holding to the ropes of the mast. Too-too, as we were just gliding off, was near the prow, and threw up his hand with a shout:

"Oo-lah! oo-lah! to the chief the young men wait for—to the *Naalatoo* of the next *yuna!*" (a period of four years).

Enthusiastic shouts filled the air from those on shore, and resounding cries of "Oo-lah! oo-lah!"

We waved our feather caps, and spears, and hands in all the delightful enthusiasm of youth, and cheered right lustily, and as we floated lazily away from the beautiful shores of Launa-gola, the young fellows who had been so kind to us grew dim, and their bright eyes and animated faces faded in the distance.

This parting, like all partings with pleasant companions, saddened us extremely. All four of us lay down upon the deck, and, without speaking a word, strained our eyes eagerly—I think they had tears in them, too—as long as we could see the land, and till the beautiful palm trees, blown by the breeze from the blue distant mountains, seemed to wave us a sad, sweet adieu.

Launa-gola, the lovely, grew dim as our tear-

ful eyes, and I never saw it again. But I often wonder, as some charm of a perfect day recalls it, if the skies are yet as blue there, and the nights of glorious moonlight still the same. Launa-gola! Launa-gola! may my heart keep you fresh forever!

The four natives in charge of the boat told us all the news of Koro-kama, and we reached it at sunset. Our girl-wives did not meet us on the shore, much to our disappointment, but Dick sprang toward us, and the chief and the mother of Zama and Too-too, and we were all overwhelmed with embraces and kisses. We felt as if we had indeed reached home.

XXII.

"THREE distinguished strangers have arrived since you left us," whispered Dick, mysteriously, to Tom and me.

"What! from the States, from America or Europe? Do they speak English, French, or anything that we know? Where was the world when they quitted it—at the same old place?"

"They speak no language that I can understand," replied Dick; "not even Sanscrit."

"*Diable!*"

"No, they don't come from him," was the reply; "there was no smell of brimstone about them. They cry furiously sometimes in English—I understand that—and then coo and gurgle to themselves, and laugh in Aliundean. Their mothers do say they have little wings on their backs, but if"——

"Oh, bah! babies," exclaimed Tom.

"Yes, three boy babies. The cunningest little cats you ever saw in your life," so Dick

remarked, and he held his chin up in the air about six inches.

He and I were nineteen years old and born in the same month. Upon my word, I was almost ashamed to go home to Coovaa. Perhaps the little cat wouldn't know its own papa. Too-too made all sorts of sport of us, and kindly volunteered to support us up the valley to see the wonderful little responsibilities. It was no special novelty to Zama. He had seen babies before—boy babies of his own, too.

"They all look alike. Little bald-headed, pug-nosed poodles. Your babies are just like other people's babies—all alike."

Impossible.

Our baby is always an exception, not only in the remarkable beauty of its little bald head—sometimes with a thin night-cap of floss on it—but in the astonishing intelligence with which he cries out in good English (if of that race), or in French or Italian, if of the Latin races. Oh, no, indeed; it is a great mistake to say that our baby is just like other people's brats. It is all bosh.

(I don't mean the baby, but the remark.)

Coovaa and Monaa, their mother being dead—or, as they express it, having "passed the portals of the sunset"—were at the house of

their mother's sister, the wife of the chief, Zah-Zah.

The first sight of the little cat that Coovaa presented laughingly for kisses almost frightened me. I was really afraid to touch it for fear it might get broken. Tom was delighted to find that his little puss—his little Tom-cat—had borrowed the large, dark violet eyes, with the long fringe of black lashes, which was his own distinguishing feature. Such beautiful eyes! good enough to go to heaven with.

After inspecting the remarkable cooing specimens of mixed races, Tom asked the small men whether they spoke English or Aliundean.

"Shame! shame! to expect so much already," cried Too-too; "why, the little pups haven't been long enough in the country to learn to bark yet. Have you, pootsie-tootsie?"

"Go away, all you boys," said Too-too's mother; "you know nothing about babies."

She pushed us into the outer room, where the carved rosewood trays, or bowls, stood heaped with fresh figs and pineapples, bananas and cocoanuts, bread-fruit, roasted pheasants, and a most delicious species of wild duck.

"Go and eat your suppers—that 's all boys are fit for. You 'll find some wine in the corner, Too-too, *ma poo-pee-ah*."

The next morning we went to our cottages,

fixed things up generally, and prepared to settle down to the grave joys of a coupled life, ornamented with babies.

These little monsters, until they are old enough to run about on their own strong legs, and talk, I must say that I consider a nuisance. Until the civilization of the present nineteenth century invents some mode of improving the manners of this small fry—civilizing babies, in fact—I must enter my protest against the said nineteenth century as a lamentable failure and a fraud, whose assurance is only equalled by its preposterous assumptions. Why, these small people are really no better than they were when little Cain screamed and scratched the face of baby Abel outside the play-grounds of Eden.

Did you ever see two or three babies put down anywhere, close together, without getting into a grand squalling row and scratching fight in four minutes? Why, little puppies and small cats will play for hours without a free fight. Even respectable pigs will treat each other politely. But babies—oh! I'm ashamed I ever was one of you.

XXIII.

In the late afternoon of the day after our arrival, when the tropical sun was hiding behind the huge forest trees of Koro-kama, Too-too and I went over to his little bird-cage of a house on the hill, near his father's, and opened the door. It was about fifteen feet in diameter, and octagonal. Eight posts of straight young trees, with the bark on them, but rubbed off smooth, and oiled, supported a peaked roof of palm-leaves. The sides were made of rolls of prettily-woven yellow and brown matting, just the width of the spaces between the pillars, and, being attached to a kind of cornice under the eaves, could be rolled up or lowered at pleasure.

At the distance of ten feet, on all sides, a hedge of wild yellow roses and white and scarlet azaleas, as high as one's chin, surrounded the place. A kind of swinging bed, or hammock, of cool netting, made of the fibres of the cocoanut, was suspended in the middle, and sashes, caps, spears, and bows and arrows hung picturesquely about

the interior. With the exception of the eight pillars, he had constructed it all himself.

Before I could observe him, he lifted me up in his arms, tossed me into the hammock, and then throwing himself on a pile of matting, began swinging the bed with his foot.

"How do you like it?"

"It 's charming, Too-too; and what a sweet smell comes blowing in from the flowers outside; but don't you get lonesome up here sometimes?"

"No;" and sinking back on his mat, he uttered some soft, sweet, peculiar cries, which I had heard from the wild birds in the forests.

In doing this he held the hammock with his foot.

"*Coroso! coroso!*" (lie still, lie still), he whispered.

I did so. Presently a soft, far-off whirring and fluttering of wings could be heard. Too-too repeated the sounds, putting his fingers to his lips, as he half rose on his elbows and watched the openings made by the uprolled curtains of matting. Delicious cooings of restless birds he imitated, gurgling notes, and charmed utterances of feathered throats. I lay back, watching, and the hedge of roses soon filled with a flash of brilliant plumes.

Birds of black and exquisite lemon and orange shadings; birds of crimson and dark mossy

green; birds flashing like winged emeralds, rubies and sapphires, alighted on the roses for a moment, fluttering and listening suspiciously.

"*Coroso! co-ro-so!*" whispered the boy, again, to me. Not daring to move, I almost held my breath, for fear I should frighten away these gorgeous winged dreams of tropic beauty. A thrill of delight passed through me.

As Too-too kept up his sounds of honeyed, alluring sweetness, the feathered visitors grew bolder, and from the odorous hedge came shyly fluttering into the cottage, hovering over the young native, and alighting on his extended fingers. He fed them with small seeds in his palms, patted their glossy backs and heads, and tossed them up flying and cooing to catch them again, till, as the sun stole through a crevice of vines and lighted up the place, the whole air seemed to flash with fluttering scarlet, and black, and orange, and green, and crimson.

I tell you, I just lay and trembled with delight; my eyes were so filled with the splendor of those colors of the tropical birds, that I did n't care a fig whether they could sing or not. To be so wondrously beautiful is quite enough. Let the gray-coated, ugly little scamps of our own colder climes do the singing, as they pull their dull brown feather overcoats over their beaks, and try to keep warm, but give me the sailing,

floating rainbows (there never was a rainbow half so beautiful as they are), and I shall do without the songs. Nature, the all-gracious and beneficent Mother, does not aggregate her favors. She distributes them fairly.

After Too-too had played with his pets for several minutes, throwing them off and calling them back again, he removed his sash, this day of white barred with scarlet, and as he lay naked chased the visitors out with it, throwing handfuls of seeds over the hedge after them.

Another fluttering and whirring of wings was heard, and I looked out. All had disappeared, and the youth, with a panting weariness, fell back on the cool, springy matting, and closed his large eyes.

"Too-too, teach me," I exclaimed, eagerly.

"It cannot be taught, Harree, *ma lalaaga.* It is the gift of Nature, and comes to me through long centuries of close living with her. Your pale races have strayed afar from our common Mother. We lie close to her breast, which succors and sustains us, and we speak her language which you once knew, but have forgotten. The one only God who lives in the fierce tornado, and smiles to us in the sunrise, shines through our souls in Nature. All Nature is his language. The more near we are to her, the nearer we are to God. See! the sun is setting." The beau-

tiful youth kneeled and bent his head with half-closed eyes, as he murmured: "Good-bye, God! I thank you for preserving me in health, and making me so eager to be happy—to enjoy all that you cast around me. Good-bye till you rise to-morrow."

I closed my eyes and lay silent—thinking, thinking, thinking.

XXIV.

The government of the Aliundeans is quite patriarchal. Each chief in his district has a kind of council of the elderly men of the tribe, with whom he consults, and by and with whose advice he acts. Murder is a crime almost unknown, and the only one that is punished with death. The culprit is compelled to take his own life, and usually selects poison. Occasionally he stabs himself, but poison is most generally chosen. The body is then taken off to a lone peak in the far mountains and burned, the ashes being thrown to the winds at sunset. Solitary confinement is the penalty for minor offences.

Chieftainship of a tribe is hereditary in most of the islands; though, if the eldest son be not thought fit for the position, by reason of dissipated habits or weakness of mind or body, he may be set aside by a majority of the tribe, the women voting just as the men do, and some one else selected. An exceedingly high estimate is placed on personal beauty; not so much mere

beauty of face—though that is highly regarded—as fine form, strength, activity and endurance.

Being an agricultural people, they have no cities and none of the vices of cities. They live in small communities or villages. They treat the aged with great respect and reverence, and are a very warm-hearted race. In brief, the natives of the Aliunde Islands, though not by any means the ideal perfect race that theorists dream of, are about as happy as any nation I am familiar with. Of course, they have their faults and failings, but when people treat me as well as these handsome islanders did I prefer to cover their faults with the fig-leaves of silence. I may leave those to the advanced skirmishers and picket guards of American or European civilization to discover and correct, if they discover the islands, as I've no doubt they will before long.

Many hundred miles of dangerous reefs extend out on all sides of the group, which is perhaps one reason why my friends and I found that they had escaped the visits of the cruisers of the Pacific Ocean. It is almost impossible for a ship to approach near enough to even get a glimpse of them, for the natural coral formation protects them as effectually from wandering strangers as if they were fortified. Our small boat alone, by the merest accident, drifted us to

them, as I have related. There are seven of the eight islands inhabited, the largest being about ten miles in diameter.

How I came to leave the Aliunde Islands I will now proceed to tell you.

XXV.

About a week after the display Too too had given me of his knowledge and skill, in relation to our gaily-dressed feathered friends, he and Dick and I paid a visit to the venerable Mooza, at the temple of trees on the mountain. The old priest was delighted to see us, and reproached us for not coming oftener, said that young men always interested him, and that he really took more pleasure in their society than in the companionship of old people. It rejuvenated him, as he looked into shining eyes, full of hope and youthful longing. There was an electric affinity, he seemed to think, in the touch of youthful palms, in the light that lighted eyes, that looked forward and upward, and not backward. If ever there was a good man, it was Mooza. *I*, I tell you boldly, would trust myself with the angels of the other life, if I were half so good and worthy to keep company with them.

"The spirits of the sunset lean waiting for Mooza," as Too-too once said to me.

Seated under the far-spreading shade of the lordly trees, we then had a long talk. Young priests and other students came out from the cottages to welcome us, and ask the news of Launagola, and of the gay, good times we had had there. They had heard we enjoyed it. Launagola was a nice place. Some of them had been there. Many more would like ever so much to go, as they understood the young men were bright, handsome and hospitable, and the girls all as beautiful as the dreams of youthful poets. Was it true, Too-too, Harree?

Truth itself was not truer than all that they had heard was the reply. And then Dick metaphorically punched his own head because he had so stupidly declined to accompany us.

While we were talking in this strain, Mooza stated that he had reason to believe that a canoe such as we had gone on would perhaps be dispatched by a chief of his acquaintance, further up the coast, in the course of a week, not to the island of Launa-gola, but to one of the more distant ones of the group. There are eight, as I have said, but only seven of them inhabited, the eighth being sterile and rocky.

This canoe would, however, touch at Launagola, both in going and returning, and could carry ten or twelve persons, besides the crew to sail her. Here, now, was a fine chance for Dick

and some of the other fellows to see something of the world. Would Mooza please inquire of this chief, and learn what arrangements could be made? He would, with much pleasure.

And then, before the darkness came on, we bowed ourselves away, and went singing down the mountain side. A party of the young fellows accompanied us to the level plain, stretching to our valley home, and with songs of love and war, glory of the chase, and joys of the swift canoe skimming bright summer seas, they left us. We reached our homes as the stars began to glitter, and soon slept the sleep of those who live active, wholesome lives in the pure, open air of these delicious climes.

We concluded, Dick and I, that we would not say anything about this trip to the remoter islands, and asked young Too-too to keep shady. Oh, certainly; he rather preferred to keep that way; for, in fact, he did not know whether his father would let him go off again. Tom was sounded in a kind of indefinite way, without giving him all the information that we had had from the youths of the mountain. No; he would not go. He did not care for cruisings to the other islands. He was going to stay at home and——

"Nurse the blue-eyed little Tom-cattie," interrupted Dick and I.

"Well—yes"—he did not care if he admitted being very much interested in that young scamp of a stranger. Besides, these seas were smiling and treacherous, and sudden storms sometimes came up, regular first-class tempests and tornadoes, that seemed to burst in a moment almost from skies as blue, and soft, and sweet as the eyes of angels.

"Bah! what do you know about the eyes of angels—never saw one in all your life," exclaimed Mr. Noah, who had very little faith—in fact, I may say none at all—in those girl-faced young men, with feathers on their shoulder-blades, as he termed them.

"He means the little copy of himself, Dick: the little bald-headed, toothless stranger, who cries in English, and laughs in Aliundean."

"Ah, no doubt."

Mr. Huntly smiled benignantly, with the calm, somewhat patronizing manner of a venerable married man of twenty years, and as if nobody else had a boy-baby at home but he.

"My dear Dick, and my dear Harry, when you young fellows have seen as much of the world as I have"——

"Hear! hear! oo-lah! oo-lah!"

"As much of the world as I have, I repeat, you will have become convinced of the hollowness of it, and of the advisability of staying where

you 're well off. Suppose a tempest should swoop down on you suddenly, while aboard one of these slight, swift-sailing craft, these double canoes of the natives, and drive you far off into unknown seas."

"We might be picked up and taken back to the States," was Dick's reply.

"And what would you do there? We have lost all the savings of a life-time (twenty years old), and would land penniless. Here we are well off. Money is nothing; we are valued for ourselves, and belong to the highest class in the land. We are chiefs and men of rank. There in the States you were nothing but a lot of beggarly department clerks, both of you."

"That's cool, by Jove! And what were you?" we asked, laughing.

"I, gentlemen—I beg pardon—I mean department clerks—I am a chief here, and I purpose remaining a chief."

"So the blamed, rascally, blue-eyed alligator with a Greek nose won't go?"

"The aforesaid alligator will not leave the island," said Tom.

As the blue-eyed one declined, he smiled as if the angels were whispering to him—those young fellows, with girl faces and swansdown on their backs, who float about our imaginations in long garments of the night, sit in impossible

positions on the edges of snowy clouds—(how cold !)—and carry no luggage but a gilt harp.

That is what Dick said, as he doesn't believe in anything he hasn't seen. (N. B.—He had never seen an angel; hence these tears).

XXVI.

In about a week, we hot-headed conspirators—always so restless that we would not take Tom's advice and stay long enough to be happy—had secret information from our youthful spies on the mountain that everything was arranged. If the consent of the high authorities could not be obtained, flight in broad daylight, concealment in the tamarind forests, a mysterious meeting near the seashore, and away to Launa-gola, a free life and the adventures of a remoter blue of other islands. That was our programme, as sketched by Too-too.

I know it was wrong, and do not undertake now to say one word in defence of it. But at nineteen the great majority of the sex to which I have the honor to belong are more prone to do what is wrong than what is respectably right. The spiced goblets of wickedness are so much more palatable than the mild milk of righteousness. The unknown beckoned us away from the life that seemed insipid and monotonous, and with-

out even demanding references of the deceptive future we prepared to set out.

Most young fellows, if forbidden to go out at night, would much rather raise the back window cautiously, crawl out on the porch, and skin their knees sliding down the posts, than descend the front stairs and go out at the hall door. Life, under our present system of modern civilization, sir, is so dismally prosaic.

Youth pricks up his ears at the suggestion of mystery, and sniffs with expanded nostrils the breezes of perfumed romance, that blow forever from the charmed shores of storied lands.

Expatiating in this latitudinarian manner to Mr. Huntly, I was mildly advised to go and put a wet towel around my head.

Well, the day arrived (poor, poor little Coo-vaa, I murmured to myself, I'll be back in two weeks sure, *sure*, no cheating this time), and then when I have seen all the islands I'll be satisfied to settle down and stay at home, as Tom does.

The young scamp whom I mentioned as gambling off his sash and then attempting to give a good character to a bad parrot, had come down to our valley to tell me and Too-too that things were all fixed, and the confederates awaited us just a mile up the mountain. Dick and Too-too chanced, unluckily, to be both far

out in another direction, hunting, and as Tom and Zama had both declined to go, but promised to say nothing of the stolen trip, I felt somewhat undecided.

The good old Mooza had been made to believe that everything was open and above-board; that Too-too's father and the girl-wives of Dick and the writer would interpose no objections; in fact, that all was lovely. Ah, me! I wish I had heeded good advice, now. But we had taken a position, and when you take that you never care to take advice. You know how it is. You 've been there, no doubt.

"If Too-too and Dicka are not here, it is their own fault," whispered the boy of the flashing eyes; "*you* must go, for the canoe lies now with her sails set. They are only waiting for us. See how blue the sky is! How the sea smiles and shines with delight! The canoe will fly like birds at sunset. Come!"

"They'll only be gone a few days—a week?" I asked, as he coaxingly pulled me along the mossy grass near a huge palm-tree. (I close my eyes now as I pause for a moment in writing this, and I see every leaf on that tree, and the trunk trembles with the wind that blew in our faces.)

Enough to say that, undecided as I was, and not wishing to start without my two friends, I

finally agreed to satisfy the young fellow by going as far as the rendezvous in the forest, at all events. We reached this place, and found five other boys, all in their teens, whom I knew well and liked, awaiting us. They led us up the height across the mountain, and pointed in the clear blue away to the seashore. The waves sparkled, the sky smiled, and the double canoe, with her sails set, danced impatiently.

Just then a concerted signal was given. Behind me lay the quiet, peaceful valley of ferns and palm-trees, and, looking back, with an affected carelessness, I said in a whisper:

"Only a week—in a week I shall be back to laugh with them all over the surprise of the adventure."

While I stood still, hesitating, the waving of a scarlet sash from the canoe excited us. We had a long run down the slopes stretching to the shore, and reached the boat. Eager joyousness welcomed us. The craft was unloosed, and as my heart gave a great bound, a choking sensation filled my throat. It was too late. The canoe, like a held-in racer, bounded away. I took my last look at the island of Koro-kama.

Coovaa, Tom, Too-too, Dick, Zama—I name them in the order in which I hold them in my heart—were all there. They would return from their hunting. They would gather around the

supper at sunset. They would kneel to the great and good Father who had kept them safe through the beautiful, blue-domed day. They would tell jokes and stories—oh, my God! A presentiment of some unlanguaged horror crept over me, cold and heavy, as I sat upon the cool, clean deck and tried to keep up my talk and jest with the rest of the young men.

A red sunset—the last I was to see in Aliunde—burned and died away on the fast-fading hills; the crimson waters flashed, and then turned into a moving darkness, lit here and there with the white crests of waves.

XXVII.

As the light faded out, I again felt a cold shivering come over me, though the air was warm.

"Take some of this spicy wine, Harree, and cheer yourself up," said my singing friends, who lay about the deck in all sorts of careless attitudes, drinking in the delicious night breeze mixed with the wine, kissing their hands to the glittering stars as they came forth, and naming their sweethearts for them. "I blow you kisses, and wish you next my naked heart." "I sigh for your beauty of dark eyes and dropped eyelids." "I drink your breath, O star of my boyhood!"

After night the wind rose suddenly, and came rushing behind us. At first it whistled past us cheerily, and our canoe seemed scarcely to touch the tops of the waves, so fast she flew before it. Then it came on us, hissing along the sea like crested snakes. We held on by the ropes, and looked defiant. We bounded up the

sides of huge billows, shivered for a moment on the heights of these watery walls, then plunged into the valley of dark, crawling liquid, as the white snakes of foam pursued, hissed, curled and sprang at us.

"It will soon be over," said the young chief in command. "A mere flurry; there is no danger if you only hold tight to the ropes, boys, and keep from getting excited."

But he looked alarmed; and, bold as the natives are as sailors, it seemed to me that the canoe was becoming unmanageable. Waves by this time like great hills of tumbling, seething foam, took us up and tossed us to other hills of spouting water. Waves dashed over us and drenched us as we clung in dead silence to the frail bark, the timbers of which were creaking and straining as if about to burst apart and cease their unequal contest with the superior powers of the sea and air. There was no good, friendly moon, with tropic splendor, to light us now; the stars veiled their faces pityingly for the poor, bright-eyed boys who had waved hands to them and wafted lovers' kisses. Blackness so horrible and dense that we panted for breath.

Suddenly, from out of this overpowering canopy of darkness, that was crushing the life out of us, boomed a crashing peal of thunder, and on all sides the vivid streaks of electric light flashed

and tore the black, tumbling waves. Our commander, when he recovered from the shock, gave some orders to the crew. It was mostly done by pantomime, for the voice could not be heard, as the rain poured down upon us. We had been so thoroughly drenched by the sea, however, that we did not mind this.

All through that fearful night the tempest of thunder and lightning continued. And the most horrible thing about it was, that almost every big wave that reared its devouring head, sprang upon the deck and snatched its human victim. I seemed to die a hundred times over, as we do in dreams.

At dawn I looked around me, as the strife of wind and water appeared to be spending its force. The beautiful double canoe, with its clean, polished deck; a platform built over the two hulls, with which we had set out so gayly the evening before, was now but a ragged wreck, and I alone the living occupant of it! All the crew and our party of youths had been, during the long hours of that seemingly endless night, torn one by one from the deck and ropes, and devoured by the cruel, leaping waves.

As the dim light first stole on me, I thought myself alone; but as it grew a little brighter, I saw, just back of me, the beautiful boy with the flashing eyes, the gay youth of the tree-temple,

who had stripped off his sash to pay his bet. He it was who had been the cause of my coming. Tangled among the dark ropes and cordage of the tattered, useless sail he lay, naked and dead. Every wave that broke over us washed that faultless form, that seemed a copy of the Apollo Belvidere. I shuddered and looked away as the water seemed to force the eyes half open, and toy and toss the curly black hair he was so proud of. "Poor, poor boy!" I murmured, bursting into a passion of tears; "the only one left to me of all the happy party, and he a corpse to haunt me till I die myself!"

As the sea subsided, I half rose, as far as my stiffened legs and arms would allow me, and, holding to the piece of mast, looked around. No land anywhere in sight. A desert of angry waters stretching in every direction. "Kovano!" I cried, thinking that the boy might not be dead, after all, but merely half stunned and unconscious.

No reply. Waiting for an hour or two, till the sea became more calm, and there was a chance to move from the hold I had kept all night, I crawled along the planks, holding still to loose cords and timbers. "Kovano!"

Close to him now, I took hold of his leg. Perfectly cold. Then I felt his pulse—his heart—there was no life in him. Upon the long

fringes of his large, half-opened eyes, the sea moisture gathered as he stared at me. A spasm of pain had passed over him as he died, and I could not bear to look. Should I leave the dead boy to haunt me perhaps for long days and nights full of fear, or loose his clenched fingers, and let the cruel sea, which had murdered him, finish its fiendish work and bury him? Not yet. No; even the dead boy was company for me. Not till the decay which succeeds death began its horrid work would I part him from the wreck for sharks to fight over.

Cautiously feeling my way, I then crawled toward the hold of one of the canoes, and attempted to get something to eat, and some of the water and wine to warm and revive me. Succeeding in this in spite of a surge which half buried me in the water, I was impelled by some species of fascination to go back to Kovano. There I fell down, clung fast to a tangled rope, and sat and looked at him, thinking over all the past—not daring to dwell on what was to come.

For hours I must have remained fixed and stunned. Occasionally I broke out in vain, imploring cries to my late companion. Sometimes I thought his lips moved, that his beautiful dark eyes had a flash of the old gay life in them. But it was only the motion of the wreck that moved his features.

And I sat still without hope, so utterly lonesome that I prayed for some of the sea-birds to alight near me. By noon, as I judged from the sun, which became once more visible, the ocean had become quite serene.

Again I went over to poor Kovano, and pressed my ear to his heart. I knew he was dead, but I merely wished to delude myself, to deceive my hopes. Then, not knowing what else to do, I arranged the stock of provisions and the wine and water, and wondered how long they would last me, as I placed them where the waves could not injure them.

One of the pretty peaked hats, woven of brown and black straw, I found drifted and wedged into a corner of the basket which held the food. As the sun was growing warm, and I had nothing on but a dripping sash of scarlet, I picked the hat out listlessly, stretched it into shape, and placed it on my head. It would protect me somewhat from the sun. In these beautiful but lonely seas, no ship will ever pass me; no one will ever see me, and I shall die slowly by starvation.

Back to my old position to which I had held all night, I soon crawled with a weary feeling of indifference. I was disposed to give up utterly, and a feeling of deep despondency came over me. At one time I started up to go to Kovano to dis-

entangle him from the ropes, and after binding his dead body to my own, fall over the edge of the canoe, and end the suspense at once.

But I checked myself, and fell back, thinking, thinking, thinking. If nothing happened before night, what then? Oh, no matter. Everything is alike indifferent to me. Could I only rush up, as in some fierce charge of men upon batteries, leap like cavalry with wild shouts upon the death volleys, speeding half-way to meet me; could I do anything to hasten the death which I felt was but loiteringly and tantalizingly approaching me, I would willingly do it. One spring would end it all.

It seemed impossible for me to believe that anything but death awaited me; and I felt a profound disgust that I had not died with the party I had started with. They were out of their suspense and misery; and if there were another world swimming within touching distance of this one, their souls, forced out of their warm, happy bodies by one of the elements of nature, had passed to it.

But I must linger and waste away, and perhaps endure all possible pangs of human pain, and, like a wounded man left upon the battle-field, pray for some one to come and kindly shoot me, so as to end my suspense. Again I fell into long trains of thought, and tried to pic-

ture to myself what all those I most cared to remember were doing, and what they were thinking of me.

How selfish the best of us are (I don't mean myself, of course). And how unhappy we sometimes make ourselves, because we think that nobody is particularly unhappy on our account.

The sea being now quite still, I spurred myself up to a little exertion. Dragging the torn piece of sail, so that it would shade me somewhat, I tied one of my arms and my waist to the strongest part of the wreck, and, as I had not slept a moment all the last night, concluded to try and get some rest. Happily, death, the brother of sleep, might change places with him and visit me, I said, as I took a pitying last look at poor Kovano's body (where now was Kovano, the bright, beautiful spirit, who had lived in that listless, but still handsome mass of flesh and stagnant blood?) As I sank back and closed my weary eyes, all my life of just nineteen years seemed to unroll and pass before me. Well, I whispered, I did as well as I could.

I lived the best life I was able to, under the circumstances; some things in it I regretted, but on the whole, if I had it to do over again, I should, perhaps, act just the same. All of you would—you don't like to think so, but you would.

XXVIII.

It is impossible for me to tell how long I slept, but when I half started up and awoke, I heard human voices, speaking in English, too. Thinking it some blessed balm of a dream, that good mother Nature often sends to console us for lost joys, I closed my eyes tightly instead of opening them, and lay still. Voices, indeed, and speaking kindly and softly of me. Emboldened by this, which certainly could be no dream, as I had never heard of any class of angels speaking English, or that it was usual to hear it in the other worlds, I suddenly opened my eyes and looked around in the utmost daze of bewilderment.

I was in the cabin of a ship, and was dressed in cool, loose, white linen clothes. Several gentlemen and ladies were about, watching me curiously. They evidently thought me a native of some of the Pacific islands, as my skin, from our habit of going without clothes, had become somewhat tanned, and then Kovano being on the

wreck with me, had induced them to believe that we were both of the same race. At least they told me this afterward. When I awoke, and began my usual practice of asking questions in English, my good rescuers were much pleased, and immediately told me that they had picked me up a few hours before, from the wreck of a double canoe, and that I was now on board of the American ship *San Francisco* (I shall never forget that ship) and bound for the city of the same name, which we were expected to reach in about a week.

Where was the wreck?

They had let it go drifting.

And my poor dead companion?

They had wrapped him in a piece of sail, weighted it with lead, and buried him in the sea.

Poor, poor Kovano!

"And where the islands—the blue, mist-hidden islands where my Washington friends and I had been so happy?"

"The young fellow is perhaps dreaming," they said, kindly.

But as I explained all my past life to them, it appeared I was speaking truth; and until the end of our voyage, which was uneventful and pleasant, I varied the monotony of sea life, till we reached San Francisco, by telling them tales

of my adventures—the Aliundean adventures of Tom, Dick and Harry.

Some kind people on board lent me money enough to get home from California (may good angels reward them), for when picked up I had nothing, being literally naked, and the scarlet sash of dear, dear Kora-kama—the only costume needed in the fair lands of the Aliunde Islands—was all I possessed.

I shall keep that as a souvenir of the rose-wreathed days of my youth—of the days when I was happy. We never appreciate those gilt-edged moments till they are gone forever.

Such a passion-absorbing desire to return to those lovely islands, sleeping afar from the noisy, money-grubbing world, in blue, encircling mists of perpetual summer, has possessed me, that I have written out this true statement of what there befell me and my friends merely for the purpose of trying to raise money enough to get back to them. My life there, has, I see every day, disqualified me for the fearfully practical world of the United States.

Relatives look upon me as an idle dreamer, with no desire to make money. Think of it! a young man with no ambition to make money. They talked in all seriousness of sending me to a lunatic asylum, when I first returned.

That far-off, unreal life and those shipwrecks

had surely affected the lower part of the brain, where the money-making desire generally resides. But I begged off, and promised to go to work—if I could find any to suit me.

Ah, well, as the proverb has it, if you cannot get what you like, you must like what you can get.

May a kind Providence turn the hearts of enough of you to buy this book, so that I may get away from you, and sail the seas again to seek the fair lands so far away beyond the blue of evening skies. Coovaa and my little boy wait for me.

And Tom, and Too-too, Dick and Zama. Oh, if I thought I should never see any of them again, I think—but no matter.

I have said it to the stars at midnight, and I will! *Adieu!*

THE END.

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